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# THE HAMPDENS

*BY HARRIET MARTINEAU.*



THE PEASANT AND THE PRINCE.

THE CROFTON BOYS.

FEATS ON THE FIORD.

SETTLERS AT HOME.

TRADITIONS OF PALESTINE.

THE BILLOW AND THE ROCK.

# THE HAMPDENS

*In Historiette*

BY

HARRIET MARTINEAU

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. E. MILLAIS, R.A.*

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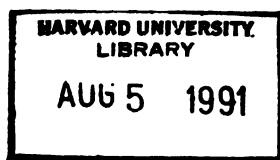
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44 N° 1000. *Leaves from the 1000 and 1001. Richard Kriehel.*

# THE HAMPDENS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### A HONEYMOON IN MERRY ENGLAND.

"Now you have seen the sea !" said Richard Knightley to his young bride, as they stood looking abroad from a point of the Cornish coast, at sunset, one bright April evening of 1635. "Now you have seen the sea at last !"

"At last !" repeated the young bride who, at seventeen, felt as if she had been longing to see the sea for an immeasurable length of years. Aware that her husband looked to her for an opinion on the spectacle, she observed :

"It is very beautiful ; but—"

"But not so grand as you had imagined. That is what I felt when my father took me to the coast, to see the company sail for the Plantations."

"That was from Plymouth."

"Yes ; but my father came hither on a visit to Sir John Eliot ; and we saw much of the coast as we travelled. I grew more afraid of the great ocean as I saw more of it, in winds and on cloudy days ; and, being little better than a child then, I suffered under a torture of fear in hearing my father and Sir John Eliot discourse of the lot of those who went to the Plantations, and of the expediency of others following, if the times should grow too hard for honest men. Every night, after

hearing these discouragements, I made a venture to pray that my father's mind might be turned from carrying me away over the wide sea."

"I thank God that it was!" the young wife whispered. "I was but a young child then; and if you had gone away—"

"We might yet have been married," said Richard Knightley, smiling. "If Sir Richard Knightley and Sir John Eliot had emigrated, Mr. Hampden would not have been left behind. You and I should have understood each other on the voyage, and have been betrothed and married in some wild forest conventicle in Massachusetts; and we should now be looking forward to troubles from Indian chiefs, instead of our headstrong King. I should have been an office-bearer in the nearest township; and my Margaret would have had to spend her days in the dairy and at the spinning-wheel, instead of tending her flower garden at Fawsley. How would you have liked to entertain squaws, instead of the ladies of Northamptonshire squires?"

Margaret shuddered. She would have been glad to be satisfied that her father would not even yet go to America. She knew that her husband had no such thought: but she was one of a family of nine; and the remotest hint of a family separation so complete and final always clouded her countenance and her spirits. Her husband comforted her with the assurance that such an emigration became more improbable from year to year; and that there were certain circumstances in her father's position now which made it evident that his duty would lie in England henceforth.

Margaret revived all the more rapidly for what she now saw. At that part of the horizon where the twilight and its mists seemed to have settled most darkly, a golden star rose up from the waters. It was the first spark of the moon; and as she showed her broad disk, the heaving of the sea-line against it delighted Margaret. She had never seen anything like it before.

She could have sat for hours watching the progress of the moon's trail upon the sea,—gradual as the movement of the hand on the clock-face: but Richard and she had agreed to visit the ruins of the Priory by moonlight; and Richard held out his hand to lift her from the grass on which they were sitting.

As they turned to go, Margaret said that she now understood the mournful vehemence of her father's regrets that his friend Eliot could not breathe one breath of Cornish air, when he was pining in the Tower.

"To think," she exclaimed, "that he might have been living now,—might have been playing the host to us, in health and strength, if his friends could have obtained for him either a trial or release! I well remember seeing the bitter tears that were wrung from my father, when he strove for this, and when the cold answers came which told him that all his efforts were in vain."

"He knew what such durance was," Richard observed. "My father says that Mr. Hampden has never been the same man since that he was before the bolt of the Gate House prison was shot behind him."

"I do not know," said Margaret. "I cannot remember so far back. But how he could be in any way better than he is now, who would undertake to say?"

"It is only that he is of a graver countenance than was his wont; and perhaps that his strength of eye and of limb is less eminent. Ah! Margaret, we can understand now his affection for this spot, and his plan for our coming hither when we married."

"I believe he often dreams of Port Eliot, and the Priory, and the sea," said Margaret. "And he well may," she observed, as she paused, and turned for another view of the bay, and the dim lines of the opposite coast, and the moonlit open sea. "That ship—you see it in the shadow yonder,—should be between us and the moon's trail; and then it would

be like the pictures. Pictures of the sea seem always to have a ship in the middle."

"I wonder," Richard observed, "why that vessel is so deep in the shadow. It looks dangerous to hug the land in that way: but I suppose she has a reason."

"And we," said Margaret, "have a reason for making better speed. My aunt will be sending searchers down to the sands, to see if we have fallen from the rocks."

"She thinks we are at the Priory ruins, my dear. Hark! It seems as if she had sent our whole party there, to look for us."

There were several merry voices singing about the ruins as the young couple arrived there. The travelling party had been a large one, for it included several bridesmaids,—Knightleys and Hampdens,—and the two Eliots, youths under the guardianship of Mr. Hampden; also cousin Harry Carewe, and his mother, Lady Carewe, who had had time, since she became a widow, to keep a strict and tender watch over the children of her long dead sister, Mrs. Hampden. All the party but Lady Carewe had turned out of the house for a ramble in the grounds before supper; and most of them had met at the Priory ruins, which were indeed the principal object within the park fence.

"O Margaret!" cried her young sister Alice, running up as soon as Margaret appeared in the broad moonlight of the lawn, "did you ever see such a beautiful place as this before?"

"No, dear; I never did," her sister answered. Whereupon a booted and spurred figure emerged from the nearest arch, and made an obeisance of mock solemnity. It was John Eliot, who professed himself extremely flattered that his humble mansion was honoured with the approbation of his friends.

"It is not the mansion," Alice unceremoniously declared. She did not care for fine rooms, and great staircases, and galleries full of pictures. It was the green slope towards the sea that was so charming, and the rocks, and the bay, and those

beautiful ruins, where one might play hide-and-seek all day long.

"Is Henrietta taking her turn to hide?" Margaret asked. Henrietta, the next in age to Margaret, was in nominal charge of the younger ones; but it seemed as if she had forgotten them, and they her. Nobody could tell where she was; but everybody supposed she was moping by herself somewhere.

"Pensive nun, devout and pure,  
Sober, steadfast, and demure,"

a voice said from behind.

"Who said that?" asked John Eliot.

"I myself, at your service," replied Harry Carewe, coming into the light.

"O yes, we know your voice, Master Harry. What I asked was, where you found that poetry you were making free with."

"Any body may have knowledge of that poetry who goes to my college," replied Harry. "There are fellows there who gather up every line that John Milton writes and shows to any of his friends. I repeated that farrago of sweet melancholy to Henrietta weeks ago."

"Ah! that is the way you won her ear," John Eliot observed.

"Why should her ear not be won, and by me?" Harry asked, rather hotly.

"But where is she?" her brother-in-law inquired. "Come, Margaret, we will go and seek her in the ruins."

They were just passing under the great arch when a distant cry, or tumult of cries, brought them back to the party.

"What on earth is that!" cried one and another, as a fearful shouting and screaming arose, far away in the direction of the little town. Henrietta came flying from her hidden seat, terrified by the same sounds. In another minute, the church bells were clanging, and the alarm bell in the marketplace rang out half-a-dozen times, and then stopped.



"Something is the matter : let us go home," said Margaret.

The young men said they would see the damsels safe to the house, and then go and learn whether there was a fire which they could help to put out.

"No, no, Richard !" Margaret was whispering, when a footman came running up, with Lady Carewe's commands that everybody should return that instant. The house was to be shut up and barricaded ; for it was too probable that a band of pirates had landed.

"Pirates ! In England !" whispered Margaret to her husband. "What can the man mean ?"

"He may be right, my love. Come home !" said Richard ; and the whole party returned to the mansion, as if they were racing for sport.

The great door was open before they had mounted the steps. Lady Carewe met them in the hall, prepared to direct their movements.

"The defences of the house are good," she said. "One of the servants, and one of you young men, will suffice to guard us here. The others will, I am sure, hasten to the town, to learn what the mischief really is, and do their best to mend it. Here are your arms, my dear boys. A draught of wine, and then no delay !"

She handed the wine-cup to John Eliot, saying with a smile that Mr. Knightley should be served last, as he was not going forth. She claimed him to act as garrison. Margaret here seized and kissed her aunt's hand. Richard remonstrated in favour of Harry,—his mother's only son : but her mind was made up : she declared that the horses were waiting, and hurried away the three young men, with all the out and indoor-servants that could be mustered.

But for the care that the trembling children required, all who remained behind would have spent the time in looking and listening for signs from the town. Lady Carewe did not insist on even the youngest going to bed. She encouraged

them to eat, she let little Lucy and Kitty hide their faces in her bosom ; and she roused Nathanael's spirit by discoursing of the honour to brave men of living in troubled times, if they found out their own proper duty, and did it well. The boy had looked half-anxious and half-frightened while in the hall ; but his eyes shone in the firelight as he asked his aunt whether she and all of them were living in troubled times now.

"What think you of this night, Nathanael? At the year's end I will ask you what you think of this very year. Yes, our country is in trouble ; and it will be in days of trouble to come that every brave man will have hard things to do and to bear. Thou art like thy father, my boy, as I see thee now. Only be like thy father when it comes to thy turn to be tried, and we shall have one happiness, whatever comes to pass."

"I wish there was something that I could do," the boy sighed, looking round him.

"There is something, at this moment," the aunt declared. "Learn for us whether anything can be seen or heard from the top of the house. Richard and Margaret are probably on the leads. Find them, and bring us the news. You know the way to the leads?"

"I will find it out," said the boy, stoutly, while his sisters trembled in the good aunt's embrace.

Richard and Margaret were silent when Nathanael joined them. The cries from below had struck them dumb. There was not much to be heard now ; the lights seemed to be all collected on the beach, and the confusion was subsiding. By the time the boy was turning to go down, the tramp of horses was heard, and Richard hailed from the lea.

"Pirates !" was the reply. "A crew of Turks, the people say. They are off. They were gone before the country could rise."

When the party were collected round the fire it was midnight ; but nobody thought of going to bed. These pirates had landed at the fishermen's place, and in the fishermen's

manner ; and before the poor people could collect their wits, or consult, the tawny strangers from Tunis had cowed them all. John Eliot told the news, without preface, that they had carried off twenty-six children.

A shriek from the little girls showed him how indiscreet he had been : and he tried to make up for it. He assured them that the pirates were all gone ; and if they were not, he would take care of everybody that was under his roof. He was master here, the young gentleman was pleased to say ; and every guest of his was as safe as the king himself. However, the ruffians were far enough off by this time. He had himself seen their boats scudding away to their ship ; and the ship must be now almost out of sight.

“ But they may come back ! ” said some one.

“ This is the last place now that they will ever visit,” John declared. “ No devil in hell would come a second time within hearing of the agony of those mothers. I never thought . . . ” Lady Carewe interrupted him by rising, and saying—

“ We will pray for all who are in sorrow and in fear : ” and then there was silence till the servants came in for worship. A watch was afterwards appointed for the night ; and all the rest went to their beds. How much anybody slept was never inquired.

In the morning John Eliot and his groom rode away for Buckinghamshire, to inform Mr. Hampden and his friends of the outrage. At Port Eliot all was tumult. Nothing could now be done, or could have been done from the first in the way of rescue of the poor captives. There was no guard in the bay,—no defence along the coast. The repeated petitions of the Cornish people to Government had been utterly neglected, till they entreated to be allowed to provide for their own defence with the money claimed by the king for the purpose ; and this request was treated as insolence and disobedience, if not rank treason.

There was something of what the Court would have called

treason going on in the market-place, when Richard Knightley entered it. The gentry and yeomanry from twenty miles round were there ; and almost every man of them was in the utmost indignation. Where was the use of paying ship-money, they asked, if there was never a ship there to defend any part of the coast ?

The new impositions on cargoes, out and in, the tonnage and poundage, were a greater burden than the commerce of the ports of England would bear ; but the answer was, that commerce itself must stop without a guarding of the seas. And how were the seas guarded ? Who did not remember the ferment, some months ago, when the Spaniards in the Channel insulted the English flag ? And from nothing being done then, the Dutch had been emboldened to capture two rich Indiamen, almost within sight of our own shores. French ships had sailed some way up the Severn, looking out, no doubt, for a good place for their Barbary allies to land for pillage. And, now that ship-money was added to the other taxes, here were the Algerines hovering about the track of our trade. The last ship they seized was worth £260,000. All that sum gone for want of defence, just as if the owners had paid nothing for guarding the seas ! And now, here was this outrage,—the seizing of twenty-six children . . .

Then burst forth the question which was stifling every heart ; —what could be done about these children ? Was it possible that nothing could be done ?

Was anything known of the fate of former captives ?

“ Yes ; the pirates who ravaged Baltimore, in Ireland, four years ago, were Turks like these. They were allowed to land their captives, as slaves, at Rochelle ; and some travellers in France had seen those victims on their march to Marseilles. They were dusty and footsore, and loaded with chains. These Port Eliot children could not wear chains, nor cross France on foot : but they would be made slaves of. Could no petition obtain from the king some ship to follow these pirates ? Could

not the case be set before the French court, so as to recover the children from a French port, if the Turks should stop there as usual?

Mr. Knightley gave some shadow of comfort by telling that John Eliot was on his way to inform Mr. Hampden of the case. Several voices cried, that if anybody could obtain ships for pursuit, it was Mr. Hampden. But then arose the question whether there were any ships that could go.

To this many voices replied. The sums paid for ship-money were very large. Some London citizens had paid in one lump three or four hundred pounds; and there was no security against the call being repeated at any time. Every lodger in London was charged from ten to forty shillings: and the kingdom at large was reckoned to have yielded £700,000 by this tax alone. After all, there was no sign of guarding the seas. The citizens were not allowed to fulfil the original order, to provide a ship in fair trim for this or that district. At best, this would have been an arbitrary charge: but it was insufferable that the money should be extorted, instead of the ship, and that the seas should be unguarded after all.

One after another of these quiet country squires and yeomen for the first time breathed doubts whether such things should be submitted to. The anguish of the mothers, whose wailings came upon the wind, moved not only the hearts but the tempers of the citizens. Was it possible that the King did not know what was done in his name? Some turned their eyes on Knightley, who might have been in London lately, and who was, at all events, the son-in-law of Mr. Hampden.

"Is it possible," Richard asked, "that the King should be unaware, while Mr. Hampden is withstanding him to the face about this very tax?"

The stir among the squires, and then, by degrees, among the crowd, astonished him. He observed to those next him that one might think it was news to the people that Mr. Hampden was refusing to pay shipmoney. He learned that it *was* news

and the anxiety was so great to hear the fact, and how it had happened, that Richard soon found himself addressing a crowd of several hundreds, so eager to hear that a sudden silence prevailed in the market-place. A voice called out to him from the thick of the throng, desiring him to speak freely, as there were none but friends present; and this brought out, on the other hand, several kindly cautions to beware what he said, as there might be treachery in the invitation to open his heart.

Richard replied that everybody was welcome to all he had to tell, which was known to the whole kingdom, except such by-places as this Cornish coast. His tidings were simply that his father-in-law, and several other Buckinghamshire gentlemen, had declined paying this tax half-a-year ago, and that Mr. Hampden meant to stand by his refusal, in order that one case might ascertain the law for all.

Loud cheers arose at this announcement, stopped at last only by the wish to hear the how, the when, and the why of the whole story.

"It is easily told," Richard observed, as he mounted another step of the market cross on which he was standing. "I will tell you the story in a moment, if you will take it into your hearts as I speak it. Mr. Hampden may have to suffer a great deal on account of his refusal to pay. The charge is only a few shillings; but the expenses may be thousands of pounds; and, to a man who has nine children, that must always be a matter of importance. But he is in a worse peril than that. He may have to go to prison again; and no man knows better the miseries of such an imprisonment as he may have to endure. I need not tell you Cornish men what it is to lie hidden for years in the damps and dreariness of the Tower, or the Gate House. You remember how long and vainly you waited for a sight of your own great neighbour who never more came home to the Priory, because he had stood up against the forced loan in the last parliament. Year by year you hoped to see his face again,—and when rumour said

he was ill, you drew from your sorrow the hope that he would be released, and would come to be restored by his beloved Cornish air."

"Aye, we did," exclaimed a voice; and then a hundred echoed it—"Aye, we did! we did! But we never saw him. Some people do not believe that he is dead. They think he will come down some day. Is it sure that he is dead?"

"It is too sure; but the doubt is not wonderful, seeing that his oppressors have been afraid to let his dead body out of their keeping. You have not been allowed to lay him in his family grave with honour. You did ask it—"

"Aye, we did!"

"Family, neighbours, friends, all asked it; and what was the answer? An order to the Lieutenant of the Tower to bury the body within the walls. So prison damps rest on his grave, in some corner of that dismal place, instead of this spring sunshine on the breezy hillside. Mr. Hampden was very dear to him, as you know by his being now guardian to John and Edmund Eliot. Mr. Hampden has lost some of the brightness of his own life in prison; he has felt in his heart every torment that afflicted his friend: yet he has now offered himself for the trial of this case of ship-money, which is really and truly the same cause under another name. He believes that many citizens will follow the course of refusing to enable the King to do without parliaments; but if no one but himself were to make the venture, he would still do it, for love of the liberties of England."

A hundred voices vowed that, with such a man to lead, there would be half England to follow. But how did he do it?

"When the writs came down into Buckinghamshire," Richard said, "those who disputed the King's right refused to pay. Then new sheriffs were appointed by the King's authority, and there was a general expectation of some rebuke to the late High Sheriff. Sir Peter Temple accordingly received a writ commanding him to account to his successor for the amount

of the ship-money, and to deliver over the former warrant to him. Then the country gentlemen understood that the business would be followed up, and that every man who refused to pay must prepare for consequences. It was in cold weather that the parish meeting was held in which this affair was to be adventured. You may remember what the 11th of last January was on this sunny coast of yours, with mild sea airs to temper the frosts. With us on the Chiltern Hills it was bitterly cold ; and the church at Kimble was not a warm place of meeting. Yet it was well filled ; and there was a glow in many faces when men's eyes met, and sufficient heat from their tongues before all was done."

"And how was it done?"

"The assessors declared the rate, whereof Mr. Hampden's part was thirty-one shillings and sixpence. Mr. Hampden and the rest, including the parish constables, declined to pay the whole, or any part."

"Did the constables refuse?"

"They did—to their honour ; and they wrote down their own names in the return, without any shrinking. Before they parted off to their homes, some on and some under the hills, Mr. Hampden told them that having put his name first on the record, he was prepared to take the first place in answering for that record."

"And has any consequence ensued?" asked several voices.

"Has he been called to account? Is the King offended?"

"No doubt the King is offended. He overlooks Mr. Hampden's open profession that the King and the Government should be abundantly supplied with all that they can need, or honestly desire ; but that it must be on the condition that the supplies should be obtained in the safe and sacred way of a parliament, and not by putting the whole nation at the mercy of the King's or the Queen's fancy—"

"Aye! the Queen's!" observed several hearers.

"Or," continued Richard, "at the mercy of men and women



of low repute who obtain monopolies from the royal favour,—the right of selling for their own profit the most necessary articles of use.”

Every one present fully understood this last reference ; and the tumult of voices was so great, that Richard supposed his speaking was over for the day. Gentle and simple complained of the cost of living in England now, when all articles of use that could be corrupted were bad, and all dear ; and of the pretences made to screw money out of them, or money’s worth. Several told of relations who had had soldiers billeted on them,—the King’s hounds, as these soldiers were called, who hunted the people for their master’s pleasure and interest. Some had been fined because they refused to bow to the altar, in popish fashion ; and fined twice over, to escape transportation for refusing this idolatry. A tavern dinner was too costly, now that the meat dressed in taverns was taxed ; and the innkeepers were ruined by this, and by the charges on every article, from tobacco pipes up to the choicest wines. The laundresses were ruined, and all families perplexed by the monopoly of soap given to a Romish corporation, who sold for soap a mixture of lime and tallow, which gave sore hands to all the washerwomen, and left the linen fouler than before ; the linen also falling into tinder wherever it was touched. The assignment of the old forests of the kingdom to the Queen’s creatures was one of the sorest grievances. Dean Forest had been thus made over to papists, who would take very good care that the Spaniards and French had the range of the seas ; and the people of England were not only called upon to pay to the King the cost of ships instead of giving him the ships themselves, but they got no ships at all. The timber which should make them was given away to foreigners, and English children were carried off by pirates, more and more boldly because there were no ships to give chase. This topic brought upon Richard further questions as to what Mr. Hampden would advise.

"He has since been charged," Richard declared, "with twenty shillings more ship-money, on account of another property; and, from some searchings into the business which we have heard of, we expect that the trial—"

"The trial!" exclaimed some startled people,

"Surely! Of what else have we been speaking? Mr. Hampden will be brought to trial for refusing to pay those last twenty shillings. I shall give him what message you send. What shall it be?"

The messages were very various; but the general sense was the same. It was a message of blessing. Some thanked him; some bade him keep up his heart; some begged to be summoned whenever he thought they could support him; or, as some said, rescue him. To these last Richard replied, that Mr. Hampden was standing up for law and order, and that he desired to be rescued by law only from a peril into which he entered with deliberate intent. Being asked for his opinion, Richard gave it,—that Mr. Hampden would consider those his best friends who best stood up for the law in those evil days. Let every man satisfy himself that this new way of taxing was illegal, and then oppose it. If every citizen refused to pay ship-money, it could not be levied.

"Then there would be something else instead," the people said.

"Probably, and it would be dealt with in like manner," Richard supposed.

It was a dreary prospect; but that day there was the best news that had been heard in Cornwall for many a year. The mothers at Port Eliot shut themselves up to bemoan their loss: the gentry and yeomen hastened to mount, and spurred homewards, only stopping at every hamlet to spread the news that Mr. Hampden was going to turn the ship-money into ships which would chase the Dutch and Spaniards and French, and the Barbary pirates from the English shores.

## CHAPTER II.

### LOVERS' PERILS IN MERRY ENGLAND.

WHEN the young men entered the Priory gate they found a family group seated in the sunshine on the lawn. The ladies and children seemed to have assembled there in eagerness for news; and the eagerness must be great to overcome their dread of marauders from the sea. Lady Carewe related that she found there was no keeping the young people within; so she had issued forth with them, to see that no one of them passed the gate. She had placed scouts, so that no enemy could approach unobserved: but she did not seriously suppose that any pirates remained in the neighbourhood, or would appear while the country was excited with rage and terror.

"I believe there is nothing to fear," Richard began, when his wife exclaimed that he was too hoarse to speak. He was in fact so thirsty and hoarse after his oratory,—this being his first public speech,—that he was glad to be led by Margaret to the house for refreshment and rest. It was observed that, voiceless as he was, he was eagerly conversing with his wife, even pausing again and again, till they disappeared within the door. Harry Carewe was inquiring of Lucy and Kitty where Henrietta was,—the only absent member of the party. The sisters looked round, had seen her not long before, supposed she had stolen away, as usual, and might probably be found in her favourite green walk among the ruins.

"Very imprudent!" Harry grumbled, as he ran towards the

ruins, whence he made a sign that all was well, Henrietta appearing at the moment.

"There go two of them," Alice complained, "to tell Margaret and Henrietta everything before we have heard a word about the pirates."

"We will tell you about the whole matter," said the younger Eliot. "Only let us have a draught of yonder ale,—our throats are so dry." And he went to meet the servant who was bringing a pitcher and tankard from the house.

"Your throat dry, Edmund?"

"Yes, Miss Alice. Every throat was dry; for you must know, such of us as were not orators had to sustain those who were. We had to cheer Knightley; and he so spoke that we could not but do it with all our hearts, and with all our strength."

Edmund related how the gentry and farmers were riding in every direction to inform the people that something was now to be done about the ship-money, and about guarding the seas. It was a proud hearing for the family when Edmund told how the very name of Mr. Hampden put spirit into every man present; or, if there were any there who took the other side, they held their peace.

"So far well," Lady Carewe observed. "But will any action follow? Will these Cornishmen take a part from this day forward? or will they only hold their voices, ready to shout for the next patriot that they may chance to see?"

"Richard says he never saw men in earnest, if these are not."

"In earnest to do what?" Alice asked. "What would they do next?"

"They will insist on a parliament."

"What is a parliament?" Nathanael wanted to know.

Lady Carewe shook her head, and sighed forth her sorrow that there should be an English boy,—a boy of such a family as the Hampdens,—that had not heard at least as much of

Parliament as of the Court, and who did not even know what a parliament was.

"But what is it?" Nathanael demanded. "Is it——"

He was stopped by a pair of hands laid on his mouth from behind. It was Henrietta; and as the boy struggled, she whispered in his ear, and let him go.

"What does she say?" asked Edmund in great surprise.

"She says I must not ask that question,—about a parliament. Yes,—about a parliament," the boy repeated in a defiant way. "If Edmund speaks of a parliament here, and Richard down in the town, why may not I?"

"Because it is unlawful and wrong: the King has forbidden it," Henrietta replied.

"Aunt Carewe, is that true?" asked Lucy and Kitty.

"It is true that the King has made a proclamation that no person in the kingdom shall even speak of a parliament: but it does not follow that you may not ask what a parliament is, nor that Richard may not advise the Cornishmen to get another parliament if they can."

"But aunt, how can that be?"

"How, indeed?" murmured Henrietta, as she stood with face averted.

"In the first place," Lady Carewe explained, "the King could hardly mean that any institution of the country should not be spoken of as a historical fact: and, in the next place, the King may have been led into a mistake in issuing such an order."

"There, Henrietta, what do you say to that?" asked Alice.

"I say," she replied, "that I think we have nothing to do but to obey the King's command, whatever it means."

"And whether he has a right to issue it or not?" Harry inquired.

"Yes, Harry," she replied, looking up with heightened

colour. "Who can possibly have any right to suppose the King wrong, and disobey him for that reason?"

"Who can judge?" Nathanael asked of his aunt. "Does anybody know better than the King what he should order?"

"The wisest and best men in parliament,—in the country," Lady Carewe continued, remembering that the boy did not know the significance of a citizen being in parliament,—“the wisest men now living in England consider the King to be misled. They have for years been hoping to bring him to reason by inducing him to call together the great national council,—that is, the parliament: and he is so vexed at their steadiness in asking this, that he now forbids that the subject shall be discussed by anybody.”

"But who are the wise men who tease the King?"

"Your father is one of them: and some persons consider him the wisest of them all."

"But, aunt," Lucy broke in, "I am sure my papa never teases anybody."

"That is true, my dear. Your father is a gentleman of an even and sweet temper, and of such noble and gentle manners that not even the Queen, with her foreign prejudices and her foreign papists about her, can frown upon Mr. Hampden. But your father is as steady as he is gentle: he never gives up, and he never will give up the demand that the people of England shall be governed by the law: and, as the King chooses to make his own will the law, there can be no agreement between him and the wise men who think and say what your father thinks and says."

Who were these wise men? the children desired to know. John Eliot was too young, they supposed; but if his father had been alive, would he have been one?

There could be no doubt about that, as the children would see when they came to understand why their father's best friend had died in prison,—full of virtues as he was, and without any fault. Nathanael and his sisters saw that Edmund's eyes were

full of tears, and they hastened from the subject. They went over the names of all their father's best-known friends. Was Dr. Giles, the rector at home, one of the wise men? Was Sir Richard Knightley? Was Mr. Pym? Was Mr. Hyde?"

Henrietta advised them to ask whether Sir Thomas Wentworth—(they remembered Sir Thomas Wentworth?)—was he one of the wise men of the nation?

Edmund replied that he had once been so; but that his backsliding was now known to all the kingdom.

"He is a dutiful subject," exclaimed Henrietta, "and a hero for his bold faithfulness to his sovereign. If ever a man was thorough, it is he."

"You have taken up his own word, Henrietta," said Harry. "He will have everything 'thorough.'"

"Just so," Henrietta agreed. He was a man whose words and character corresponded.

"But you know, Henrietta," Lucy sagely observed, "if he does not think as our papa does, he cannot be right."

Henrietta made no reply to this; and the children went on with their catalogue.

Was Cousin Oliver one of the wise men? Henrietta was smiling; but they were not considering whether Cousin Oliver was as good-looking as papa, or as merry and handsomely dressed as Mr. Pym, or as dignified and gentle as Lord Falkland, and Lord Say, and Lord Brook. He certainly wore very ugly clothes, and when he came up from the decoys, after his fowling, he might be taken for one of his own boatmen: but he was very good, for all that; and he might perhaps be very wise.

Yes, the cousins, Mr. Hampden and Mr. Oliver Cromwell, were of one mind on the state of the kingdom.

"And Uncle Oliver?" asked Henrietta, with a half smile.

Lady Carewe thought it would have been kinder not to bring forward the name of Uncle Oliver. Sir Oliver Cromwell was old; he had made some mistakes in life which had compelled

him to leave Hinchinbrooke, and retire into the Fens. It was more respectful to an old and unfortunate gentleman to pass him by in silence than to make inquiry about his wisdom.

"O aunt!" Henrietta exclaimed, "you mistake me utterly. I honour Uncle Oliver more, I believe, than all of you together. He has made no mistake in the main point. He is devoted to his sovereign; and, in my eyes, that virtue atones for mistakes which more thrifty men never make."

"I am sure that is enough about Uncle Oliver, considering that we never saw him," Lucy declared. "Why cannot the King and Queen, and so many wise men, settle matters so that there may not be all this quarrelling? I am sure, Henrietta, that you and Harry have been quarrelling again. Ah! you may pretend what you like,—and so may Harry; but we know very well when you have been disputing. Kitty will tell you so. Harry's face is red, and you look—"

"Lucy, I think you are talking very unkindly," said Lady Carewe, who had been listening in another direction till her son's name caught her ear. Lucy was duly abashed.

"I will tell you," said Henrietta, panting with emotion of some sort, "why the King and these wonderfully wise men cannot settle their quarrel. It is because the wise men will not. They cry out for a parliament—"

"There now, Henrietta! you are speaking of a parliament!"

"I am speaking on behalf of the King," Henrietta said, with dignity, as if this gave her a right to a topic which all others must avoid. "Those who cry out for a parliament choose to forget that when there was one, it refused the King the money he wanted; and that, if there were to be another, it would be obstinate in its own way, and disoblige and check its sovereign in every possible case."

"That would be very rude and very wicked," Nathanael sagely declared. This much support animated Henrietta.

"All this talk about the ship-money, and about the soap,



and the beer and wine, and the saltpetre and sedan-chairs, and all the rest of the monopolies, is disgusting," she declared, "when we all know that the King must have money, like any other gentleman, and more of it—"

"Yes, certainly," said Nathanael, nodding assent.

"And that if the nation will not give him the means of living, he must take them as he can. There is as much stir about the salt, as if the King was doing something wicked on purpose—"

"So he is," said Edmund. "You should have heard what the fishermen below were saying about that this morning. When the salt becomes as bad as the soap is now, there will be an end of their trade."

"Then they should ask themselves how the King can call a parliament which would only contradict and vex him. For my part, I think he is only consulting his own dignity, and what is due to the Queen and her family, in making himself independent of his undutiful people, and showing them how he can do without them."

"That is a point which remains to be proved," Edmund Eliot observed. Harry was no longer present, to hear or to reply. When Henrietta began to speak her mind, he had pushed his hat from his brow, and slowly walked away from the party.

"I know I am saying what no one else here will believe," Henrietta declared, with a slight trembling in her voice. Nathanael came round to her and held her hand; and she kissed his forehead, addressing her remaining words to him.

"When everybody is harsh with a sovereign who is above human judgment," she said, "it is the right and the duty of even the humblest of his subjects to declare for right and duty. It might be easier to be silent —"

"Not to you surely, Henrietta," said Alice.

"I think it is easier to Henrietta to speak than to be silent," Lady Carewe observed with a smile. "But I trust we are all

willing that every one should think and speak his or her own thoughts and feelings. When we are strong for the freedom of the whole country, we must see to it that every one has liberty at home."

"Thank you, aunt," Henrietta sighed.

"But that there may be liberty on either part, I must observe that everything that Henrietta has taken for granted in what she has said is the very subject-matter of the controversy between the King and his people. Your father, and Cousin Oliver, and Mr. Pym, Henrietta, are strong in one common conviction as they consult together round the lamp at Hampden, or at St. Ives, or in London: and you are confident of the direct contrary, on the lawn here at sunset, by the sea-side. Be faithful to what you believe; but can you really be displeased with those who differ from you? I do not seek an answer, my love—"

"But, aunt, I must answer. If it is right that kings should be obeyed—"

"That is the very question under the circumstances," Edmund observed. He would have explained the "circumstances," but that Henrietta covered her face with her hands in horror. She could not reason with any one who could make a question of obedience to God's vicegerent upon earth. As she ran towards the house, Nathanael sped after her. She waited for him, put her arm round his neck, and was evidently talking caressingly with him.

"Do look at Harry!" Edmund whispered to Alice. "One would think he was jealous of her own young brother."

Harry was gazing after her from the shadow of an arch in the ruins. His mother was of opinion that it was growing too late to sit out of doors—not for fear of the pirates, but of the dews. She rose from her seat, and all followed her into the house.

It was not a happy evening for anybody. The young men went out at dark to see the watch set, and visit the stations on

the rocks for a mile or two on either hand. The servants came in, every half-hour, with painful accounts of the increasing anguish of the bereaved parents, who had been assured by some Job's comforters that their children were gone into a slavery, the horrors of which were indescribable. Lady Carewe saw enough this night of the effect of such a calamity on the young people to determine her to remove them homewards as soon as the journey could be arranged. It was little like a bridal-party, from the bride herself, who wept afresh at every detail of the grief below, to the frightened Kitty, who would not leave hold of her aunt's hand. That kind aunt moved about the room, speaking a word of comfort to one and another. Leaning over Margaret, she whispered :

"These are dark early days, my child, for you : but you have a special blessing in a husband who does what he can to protect and console."

Margaret looked up, smiling through her tears, and promised to try to do her part worthily. Richard thought there might be darker days coming : but he would never be found faltering, she was sure, in the very darkest.

"There is a light for the people of God, to guide their feet, amidst the snares of a false church," said Lady Carewe.

"God's light is the crown of the King," Henrietta said. "In disobeying the King, the people choose darkness rather than light."

"Let us take refuge in the Word, and in prayer," said Lady Carewe. And she summoned the servants to worship. She read from the Old Testament of the wars and the promises of the chosen people, and prayed for a share in the promises for all who were under chastisement through the sins of rulers. When the household rose from their knees, she dismissed them to their rest. She and one or two of the servants would sit up for the young men's return.

The young men returned before Margaret and Henrietta were in bed, and the sisters listened from the stair-head for the

news. Nothing had happened to cause any fresh alarm. Yet Henrietta could not sleep. She believed that her aunt and Harry were still below when all the house was quiet ; and it was late when she heard Harry's step softly mounting the stairs, and saw her aunt's light under the door as she passed. Lady Carewe was the last up, though she had invited Henrietta to an early walk down to the fishermen's cottages, where she wished to visit the unhappy mothers betimes, before the neighbours should crowd in with their rough and wounding sympathy. Henrietta hoped that she herself was the last awake, for her mind was too troubled for rest. She did sleep, however, for the sun shining in suddenly showed her that a new day was come.

## CHAPTER III.

### LOVERS' PENITENCE IN MERRY ENGLAND.

LADY CAREWE was in no haste to reach the cottages. They were not her only object. She led the way through the flower-garden, and gathered the violets, and lingered over the hyacinths while they were sparkling with dew ; and she described the Fawsley gardens in which Margaret was to take her delight. There was no trace of displeasure in her manner, and Henrietta was relieved and softened. When they had passed out upon the cliff, they sauntered in the morning sun, and dazzled their eyes with the glitter on the sea. When they had reached a recess, carpeted with grass, Lady Carewe proposed to sit awhile, and see the boats go out from the beach below.

"Now my child," said she, "I wish you would open your heart to me as if I were your mother. You are as a daughter to me ; and you always will be ; and I wish to know of every care which troubles your mind."

"Oh ! Aunt ! Indeed I cannot speak of that," replied Henrietta. "To you of all persons I can least say what I feel."

"I hope to prove to you that that is a mistake, my love. I do not ask what trouble has come between you and Harry, because I know it."

"I was sure he and you were consulting together last night," Henrietta said.

"We were. My son has told me all. He sees where he was wrong. I see where you were both wrong ; and I trust to see



She led the way through the flower-garden, and gathered the violets.



you both right when you begin to discover how great a thing your mutual love is ; how much too great a thing to be made the sport of passion—”

“Passion, Aunt !”

“Yes, passion in you, exciting passion in him. What but passion could make young creatures like you forget your ignorance of affairs which strain the best faculties of the best men in the nation ? What but passion could make either of you turn away from the path of pleasantness and peace which God has opened to you in marriage, to stake your happiness on the chances of public affairs with which neither of you has any call to meddle ?”

“Surely we have a duty, aunt, to those whom God has placed in authority over us—”

“No doubt, my dear ; and who is more devoted to that duty than the father and the friends whom you lightly condemn,—whose experience you slight, whose public virtue you do not even understand ? What duty can you have in comparison with that which weighs upon your father ? And if you and he take different views of the same duty, which is the more likely to be right !”

“Have I not warrant for loyalty to our King and Queen ?” Henrietta asked. “Can I help it if, when we read in God’s Word of submission to those who are in authority, of obedience to be rendered as we would render it to God, my heart glows with the longing to comfort and serve the sovereigns who are insulted by rude men, and presumptuous boys, and pert women ? I must tell you, aunt, my whole soul is full of reverence when I think of the King’s countenance, so divinely melancholy, and—”

“And of the Queen’s ?” asked Lady Carewe, smiling.

“The Queen’s sorrow does not show as melancholy,” said Henrietta. “She is too great to weep. She has a noble spirit, possessed of a natural right to inflict rebuke. Lady Carlisle says that when she recounts to her ladies any new



outrage on the King's authority, any check to his purposes by wilful men, she has the air of one inspired. It is impossible to meet her eye at such a moment, it flashes so gloriously. Her consort is twice a King when she is by his side. Can I help honouring such a Queen, and insisting on her being honoured, when her meanest subjects are encouraged by those who should be patterns of loyalty, to watch her conduct and revile her name?—Consider, aunt, I bear her name! Should that not bind me to her?"

"Not more than we are all bound by God having placed her on the throne. To say that she is Queen is to express our duty to her. Of that duty there is no question, my dear. The question is, how most faithfully to fulfil that duty, together with the duty of the King's subjects to one another, and to generations to come. But this is not the question for you and me at this moment. The burden lies, not on us, but on men who have understanding, and knowledge, and conscience equal to such a charge. You and I have a more humble task."

"I know all you would say about that, aunt, but if Harry and I cannot agree—"

"Well, my child, what then?"

"Oh! I do not know what I would say! I cannot settle my mind about what we ought to do. I only know I am very miserable."

And Henrietta laid her head on her aunt's shoulder, and wept bitter tears.

"Harry is miserable too," said Lady Carewe. "It was my wish to ascertain what you thought, and not to give you advice in a case in which you must judge for yourselves. But the one thing that I can do is to set before you both the choice you have to make."

"Oh, do so!" cried Henrietta.

"There is no doubt of your love for each other?"

A convulsive pressure of the hand gave Lady Carewe an instant confirmation on this point.

"You are both certain at this moment that you can never be happy apart?"

Another confirmation.

"Whether or not it might prove to be so, such is the present conviction of both of you. The question then is, whether differences of judgment, and strong prejudice or conviction on any matter of controversy, should make your part, at the entire sacrifice of the happiness of both. If you think that duty commands this sacrifice, I have no more to say;—no one ought to have a word to say."

There was a pause; but Henrietta did not speak, or lift her head.

"In such a case you must immediately part, and meet no more for some years at least."

"I could go to Uncle Oliver's," Henrietta murmured; but her aunt felt that her heart was throbbing as if it would burst.

"Or Harry must depart." Struggling with the trembling of her own voice, Lady Carewe related how Harry recoiled from the idea of remaining in England, except in Henrietta's company; and how he would hasten to the American settlements, if he must indeed lose all he cared for in life.

Henrietta saw now how serious a question it was whether her particular notion of loyalty ought to impose all this misery. She did not say so; but she told as much by her question.

"But how can we live together if we wrangle as we did yesterday?"

"That is indeed the question, my child. I would ask whether you could not agree either to humble your young minds to learn from wiser folk about these great affairs of the Church and the State, or to refrain from disputing upon them. I should say that you must either agree to this or part; and I am quite sure that the one thing which you must eschew, as you would eschew sin and sorrow, is such dispute as each of you at this moment rues."

Henrietta sighed. She was not yet ready to promise anything.

"Youthful enthusiasm will account for almost any marvel," Lady Carewe proceeded; "or else it would be incomprehensible to me that the daughter of John Hampden should, with such significance as she can, cast reproach on her father's loyalty to the King, while the King himself declares, in the most public manner, his trust in that loyalty."

Henrietta sprang to her feet, exclaiming—

"The King says so!"

"He more than says it," replied Lady Carewe, suppressing a remark on the actual value of the King's word. "As there must be some notice taken in the courts of refusals to pay this ship-money, it is rumoured that your father will be the first put upon his trial. Men say that he is chosen because the King declares that, such is Mr. Hampden's honour, and virtue, and devotedness to the crown of England that, if he shall be found to be in error, all others will repent of their recusancy."

This account, which Lady Carewe had from a sure source, was to Henrietta's mind like a breeze which sweeps the heaven clear of clouds. She saw at once that where the King suspended his judgment, she well might. In a few moments, she was laughing at her own conceit, and ready to cry again with remorse for the wilfulness which had made three persons at least so miserable. It was settled that Harry and she should abstain from dispute till it appeared whether they could agree. Lady Carewe wished she had not requested Harry to leave them uninterrupted during their walk: but she would abridge his suspense as much as she might. She and Henrietta hastened to the cottages; and there they found their task shortened. Most of the dwellings were empty. Some agents of the King's—two Royal Commissioners—were in the town; and the women had run thither to tell their tale, and implore the King to send after the pirates, and recover the children.

Some of the fishermen on the sands were talking, with scowling brows. Nothing good, they said, would be got out of these gentry, for their errand was a bad one. They were more like pirates themselves than the avengers of piracy. It had lately been said that the King was about to claim, or to authorise claims of, the soil which lay between high and low water, all round Great Britain, and up the tidal rivers. It had been supposed impossible that such a trespass could really be proposed for a moment; but there was no doubt that the Commissioners had been setting surveyors to work to ascertain the tidal limits, and measure and calculate the soil between. A seizure of that soil would affect the rights of so many old inhabitants, and the customs of the river and the shore, that signs of tumult began to appear. It was best to hie home, Lady Carewe thought. Henrietta could not help thinking how much more dutiful it would be to give the King what he asked in the way of supplies than to force him to such methods of obtaining money; but she did not now say this. She had said it very often without convincing anybody,—unless it were Nathanael; and at this moment she saw what reminded her of her new resolution to keep silence on matters of state which were in controversy.

She had seen the crown of a hat above the park-fence as they approached the gate. Harry was among the trees, watching their entrance. A smile from his mother, and the blush on Henrietta's face, showed him that he might join them.

"Forgive me!" he and Henrietta whispered to each other at the same moment. He drew her arm within his own; and they reached the house in a state of spirits which relieved the heavy anxiety of the brothers and sisters who were on the look-out for them. As Lady Carewe was taking her seat at the breakfast-table, she heard the music she loved best,—the hearty laugh which was natural to Harry, under all but the most dreary circumstances. Henrietta looked mirthful too, when she entered the breakfast-room. She frankly owned

afterwards that her folly in making a quarrel about matters which did not offend the King himself, was fair game for any who chose to laugh at it. Harry and she had laughed at themselves and one another, and they must try not to make one another cry any more.

Some of the party, however, looked very grave before breakfast was over. A horseman, well armed, spurred up the lawn, and arrived in a foam at the great door, as the family rushed out upon the steps. It was Simon, Mr. Hampden's own groom. All was well at home ; but Mr. Hampden desired the whole party to return without delay. The coast was not safe, Mr. Hampden's letter to Lady Carewe declared. He was grieved to spoil the pleasure of the young people : but these were times in which pain and trouble abounded over pleasure ; and even the youngest—even his pets, Lucy and Kitty—must learn to bear disappointment with good humour. As for Nathanael, he was as well aware as some older persons that the true manly spirit is cheerful under vexations.

This was admitted to be true ; and the children behaved heroically about leaving the sea and the ruins almost before they had begun to enjoy them : but they told one another privately that they thought it very hard that they should have this particular disappointment to bear. They were always willing, or tried to be so, to endure affliction : but then they could not have imagined such a thing as being obliged to leave the beach and the rocks before they had had any play there. If it had but been any other trial !

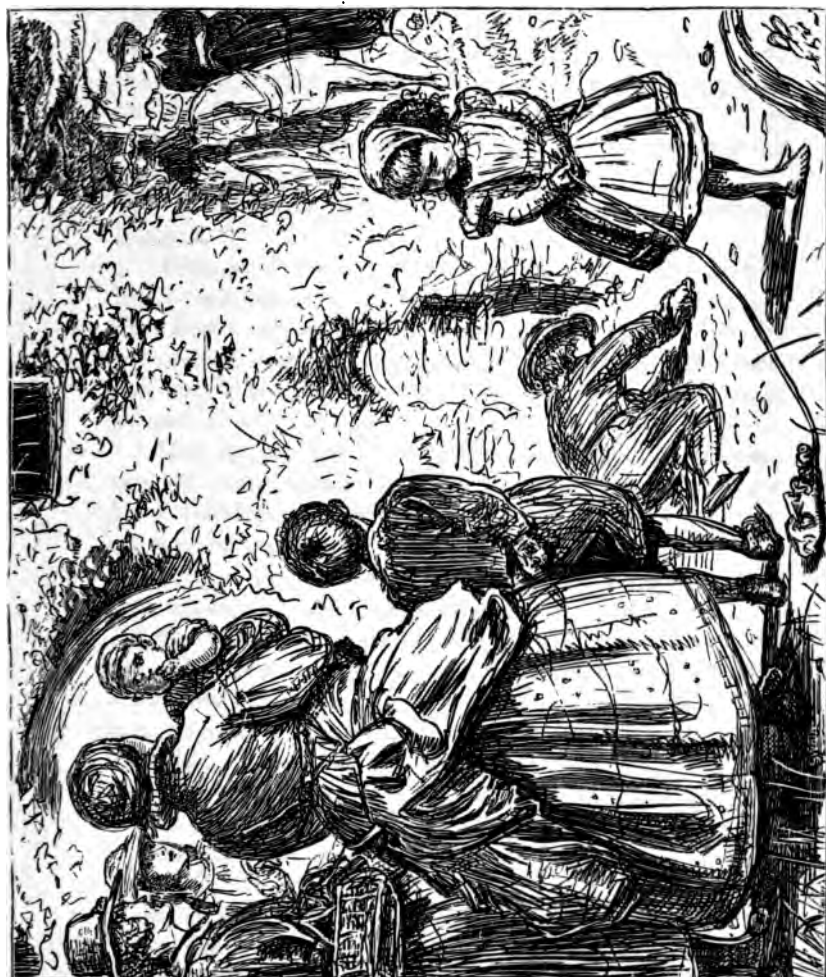
## CHAPTER IV.

### TRAVELLING FOR PLEASURE IN MERRY ENGLAND.

THERE was much beauty in the country through which the travellers passed ; but there were sights by the way-side which made them grieve that the malice of man could so spoil the life that might have been so happy. Where the blue sea lay open on the horizon, the country people were looking out for a strange sail, doubtful whether the coast-boats might venture out or not. When the party turned more inland, the vales and lanes through which they rode seemed to them like a paradise : but they found that trouble had entered there as everywhere else. A mansion looked from a distance as fair an abode as could be seen, with its shrubberies around it, and its meadows stretching to the foot of the hills ; but, on drawing near, such confusion was evident that Richard and a servant rode in among the throng on the lawn to hear whether such an abode could be for sale. It was not for sale ; but a high royalist of the county had begged the estate for a relation of his, in case of its being forfeited. Such forfeiture was threatened, and was believed to be probable, because the owner had disobliged the King's Commissioners, who had demanded of him a behaviour towards his neighbours, about the ship-money, which he refused as illegal. In order to alarm and punish him, his tenants were compelled to pay their rents to the King instead of their landlord,—some who refused being now in prison. In the fields and meadows there were armed men, compelling the labourers to take off the gates and pile them

up for firewood, and to root up the hedges, and level the banks; and as this work proceeded, the cattle were driven into the ploughed fields, to feed upon the young wheat and oats. Where this devastation did not proceed fast enough, there were brutal fellows throwing the soil into heaps, and spoiling the surface with rubbish, and bricks and stones. As Richard turned to ride away, some rude people mocked at his grieved countenance, and invited him to stay till dark, when he might chance to see a grand bonfire. The owner was not visible. He was gone to seek for protection and justice under the law; and hence the haste to levy his rents and impair his property during his absence. The under-valued estate would be given away to some partizan who would pay ship-money, or a fine, or would lend a sum of money to the King; and such grants once made were never known to be revoked. Richard Knightley took note of the name and position of the gentleman who seemed to be so wronged, and doubted not that in him would be found an eager champion for law and a constitutional parliament, whenever the hour should come for reinstating both.

Further on, there was a rare old church standing on the green, near a village where the pride of the people was in the church, with its range of fine monuments of the ancient family of the Reresbys, the last of whose male heirs had died ten years before. There was a monument to him in the church, put up by his daughters in love and reverence, and preserved by all the neighbours from their pride in him, and gratitude for his deeds in the parish. From this church shouts of merriment came, and as Lady Carewe's coach passed by, men were throwing out to the children in the churchyard bits of stone to play with. The pieces were carved. One was the curl of a periwig, one was a nose, and another a finger. A labourer gave information of what this meant. Some messengers had arrived to demand certain plate and arms from the ladies at the Grange. There was little plate and no arms;







and the strangers forced the keys of the church from the sexton, and proceeded to search the monuments for concealed treasure and weapons.

"It is pure malice," said a yeoman, who had ridden in on the first alarm, but too late. His countenance was very dark as he said that the monument of his old landlord had cost six hundred pounds; but that this was a trifle compared with the cost of breaking it up.

"You mean the grief to the ladies, his daughters?" Richard inquired.

"Why, yes," the man replied. "It may, as like as not, break their hearts to see their father's effigy so insulted; and their hearts are too good to break in such a way. But the wrong-doers may have to pay, too. Such a day's work as this will help the score that the Malignants are running up in account with Old England."

"How do you know but that you are speaking to Malignants?" Harry asked; to which the farmer replied that he knew God-fearing gentry from Malignants, and the whole country was learning the distinction fast enough.

"Will you seek redress for this outrage, for the sake of these harassed daughters?" Richard inquired.

"No," replied the yeoman, decidedly. "Neither I, nor any one under the rule of our sheriff will seek redress, in the ladies' names, nor any other. To do so is only to draw on further loss and insult. We may see about taking satisfaction,—a full satisfaction,—when the fitting time comes: but we shall not ask it. At least, one will not," he said, checking his rash speech. "I ought to speak only for myself and my household."

Henrietta, who rode with Harry, prompted him to ask whether it was possible that the King could know of such doings, and whether messengers would not be sent to give him the information.

The yeoman had no doubt of the King's general knowledge—that his own will about ship-money, and the Archbishop's

about church matters, was enforced with strong severity ; and if he did not know much more than this, he ought to know it, and it would be the worse for him if he did not.

“ Do stop him ! ” said Henrietta to her cavalier. “ I cannot bear to listen to such an undutiful way of talking.”

Harry created a diversion by asking what the Archbishop had been doing ; but the answer did not console Henrietta. The farmer told them that they would see, in a village seven miles forward on their road, the tokens of Archbishop Laud's strong will in the ruined and deserted appearance of the place. In consequence of a priest having been sent there who was as bad as a papist, if not one outright, the people, rich and poor, provided for their own worship, while paying the church dues as readily as they had ever done. The Archbishop would be satisfied with nothing less than every man, woman and child attending every service in the church ; whereas no man or woman could think it right to attend upon popish forms, or to let their children do so. When their own magistrates were unwilling to fine and imprison them for absenting themselves from church, other magistrates were found willing to go any lengths : and thus the people were all ruined, and scarcely any remained. The yeoman requested the party to look round, and take note of the state of things in that village, and they would see that he had not spoken anything but the truth. Seeing in Harry's face a look of interest about his open zeal, he observed that he had been born in that village ; but that his interest in it was from his wife's having come from thence in the midst of the troubles.

“ She, for one, has found a happy refuge,” Harry observed. His new acquaintance thanked him, but without a smile. Her parents were in a distant churchyard. Their hearts were broken in their own home ; but they could not be buried there. As the church had become damp and dreary during the people's lives, so the churchyard was all weedy and desolate now they were dead. There being nothing more to spoil there,

the King's messengers were beginning on the monuments of another church, where there was no complaint of neglect of the services.

Henrietta turned her horse when her companions had gone on, to assure the yeoman that the King certainly could not know all that was done in his name. Whenever he did, the country would see a noble redress. The farmer made his obeisance; but Henrietta began to dislike him, because he evidently put no faith in her promises on behalf of the royal power.

She was lost in thought all the way to the nettle-grown churchyard; and Harry respected her silence. He was rewarded for this by some confidence on her part.

"There is nothing that I would not do,—nothing that I would not risk," she said, "to bring all this to his knowledge."

"I wish I could help you," said Harry, in all sincerity.

"Would you? Then surely it might be done! O! Harry! it must be done! It is too terrible that such disorders should go on; and that the gentlest of kings should be charged with them! You see," she proceeded, drawing her horse close to Harry's, and leaning over to him, that no word might be picked up,—“Lady Carlisle has always been indulgent to me; and she can do anything with the Queen; and the Queen can do anything with the King.”

"Hardly, in such grave affairs as these of the levies of money. In the church matter she might: but—"

"Well, then; Lady Carlisle can do anything with Lord Wentworth, and he is all-powerful with the King."

"He is; but his temper is hard and inhuman. The people tremble when the Archbishop goes by, doubting whether he be not Satan in actual presence; but, for my part, I think Wentworth is the real devil, for pride and hardness, and banishment from that part of grace which is called repentance."

"But Lady Carlisle,—she makes his black brows relax, and

puts music into his voice in the very moment of wrath. If I could tell Lady Carlisle what we have seen—”

“It can do nothing but good,” Harry agreed ; and Henrietta became more thoughtful than ever.

After the desolate village, the evil signs and tokens seemed to multiply. A very painful scene was in full view from the windows of the inn where they stopped for the night. A gem of a garden stretched between the parsonage and the inn ; and it was the delight of the widow of the last clergyman. There were strangers here too, pretending to search for something hidden. By dusk they had buried all the lovely spring flowers, and turned up the velvet turf. In the morning, when Henrietta looked out, the fountain in the centre was a heap of ruin, and the fruit-trees, white with blossom, were prostrate. The landlord shook his head when Lady Carewe inquired kindly for the widow ; and the tears filled his eyes when he said that she had neither husband nor child, so that everyone was glad to see the pleasure she could take in her garden. She would pine now more than before ; and neither King nor Church was likely to do her any good. Most people thought that times were much changed in Merry England.

So thought the travelling party the more painfully the further they went. In the course of that day they witnessed several disturbances, from the peremptoriness of the tax-gatherers, and the discontent of the people. One of the strangest spectacles was in a country-place, where four roads met, and where, on that account, the pound was placed. There was nothing unusual in the array of soldiers who were about the pound ; nor in the exclamations of the people ; for such incidents occurred at every turn. The strangeness was in the aspect of the squire of the neighbourhood and his lady, who was on a pillion behind her husband. The squire in a loud voice, heard by all present, but by no means in a passionate manner, demanded that the cattle in the pound should be fed till some arrangement should be arrived at. The tax-gatherer

declared that he had his orders to permit no access to the animals till the owner or owners should have paid the amount of ship-money due. While the listeners kept quiet to hear what was said, the feeble low of the starving cattle reached the lady's ear. These were her cows,—her whole dairy,—her pets, and the great amusement and interest of her leisure: they were dying of hunger, and no one could get near them, by day or night. She laid her head against her husband's shoulder, and the sight of her grief stimulated the rage of the people. There could be no rescue, however, for there was a double ring of soldiers round the enclosure.

"She has not asked me to give way," the squire observed, as Richard rode up to offer his sympathy.

"I honour her devotion to a great cause," Richard replied. "My wife and I shall remember this act of fortitude when our turn comes."

"You mean to refuse the payment of ship-money?" the squire quickly asked.

"Assuredly. As the son-in-law of Mr. Hampden—"

The squire took off his hat, and bowed to his saddle, in homage to the young couple. Richard went on:

"All Mr. Hampden's children must expect to suffer from the malice of the time, as his case is to be pursued to extremity; and when the trial presses hardest, we shall remember this moment."

The lady looked up, observing that her husband's conscience being engaged in the matter, she could not say a word; but she did not think the King or his servants could be so cruel to innocent cows and their little calves. She had come herself, in the middle of the night, with only a servant or two, bringing hay. She did not want to release the cattle, because it was impossible: she never saw such a bar and padlock as had been put upon the gate: she only wanted to feed the poor things; but there were the soldiers,—all awake, and enjoying themselves over a fire in the road, singing songs, and frighten-

ing the cows. While she was telling her story, her husband privately informed Richard that he should remove her from the neighbourhood before night, so that she should hear no more before the cattle were all dead, and would not be fancying all night that she heard them lowing and moaning. The gentlemen agreed that there must come an end to such tyranny, and that the end could be nothing but rebellion, unless some arrangement could be presently made. They were of one mind, too, about the importance of Mr. Hampden's resistance. It would put the right spirit into half the country gentlemen of England. When the squire had again made his lowest bow to the family of Mr. Hampden, the tax-gatherer was further than ever from any hope of handling any ship-money in that parish. He would make an example, he resolved, by seizing all the cows of all the recusants, and starving them every one.

After the pains and troubles of the journey, the aspect of home was full of comfort. It was not many days since the travellers had left it ; but it was as charming in their eyes as if a year had gone over their heads. Those few days had made a real change. The turf on the slopes of the Chiltern Hills was greener. The children said they had never seen anything so green. Where the clefts of the hills were darkest with a growth of juniper and scattered firs, the light green sprays of the beech began to show in brilliant contrast. The rounded chalk ridges were dotted over with box, and there were clumps of box in the hollows ; but there was there also an intermixture of the bright verdure of spring ; and where the hanging woods followed the undulations of the hills, the winter barrenness was almost gone. As the cloud shadows and sungleams sped over the uplands, the verdure seemed to go and come. There were deer on the slope above Hampden House, and large flocks of sheep were on the down. In the meadows below the kine were grazing, or ruminating, or pacing down to the water. The church stood up in the sun out of its beech-grove, on a spur of the hill. As the party approached the mansion,

several horses in the paddock came rushing to the fence to see the arrival of their brethren in the cavalcade. Margaret remarked on this. There were several strange horses, and she thought there must be guests, though there had been no expectation of any.

There were guests. When the master came out to greet sister and children, he was followed, not only by Dr. Giles, but by Cousin Oliver. John Eliot's first information to Edmund was that there were other guests within,—Lord Brook and Mr. Petherick, and Mr. Pym, Sir Samuel Luke and Mr. Urrey, their near neighbour. There must be serious business in hand to cause such a gathering ; and very serious indeed the business was.

Before John Eliot had arrived with his news of the pirate attack in Cornwall, these friends of Mr. Hampden's had arranged to meet at his house, in the absence of his family, to consider the course to be pursued if the prosecution of Mr. Hampden should be rigorously proceeded with. The proved defencelessness of the Cornish coast was a strong and appropriate grievance, and John Eliot had been summoned to the library to relate the story and answer inquiries upon it. His guardian had not recommended his longer stay, not having confidence in his judgment or discretion. It was otherwise with Richard Knightley. While the travellers were refreshing themselves with an early supper, one after another of the councillors dropped in to hear about the adventures of the way.

As one story of oppression after another was told, Cousin Oliver's face grew gloomy. He started up, and paced the room at the further end, bringing up text after text of condemnation of those who spoil widows' houses, and neglect dumb beasts, and care more for the King's house than the fulfilling of promises to the poor. Neighbour Urrey stormed, and spoke treason, so that Henrietta looked up in her father's face, in a way which showed him that she could not bear it.



Mr. Hampden and Lord Brook gently urged moderation in the presence of women and children who were as yet untrained to the troubles of the time.

"I may add," said the fond father, "that these children of mine have been reared in duty, as well as shielded from troubles of public concern. Here is one," he continued, drawing Henrietta towards him, and seating her by his side, "who would be an attendant spirit, if it were possible, to gratify every wish and every fancy of the Queen her namesake—to say nothing of the King. This child of mine is our young romancist, our muse of loyalty, who meditates on the sacredness of kings, and searches her mother-tongue for golden words which may express the claims of monarchs and the duty of subjects. Is it not so, my child?"

Cousin Oliver had drawn near, and was now behind her chair. He echoed the words, saying :

"Is it so, child?"

At the same moment, he laid his strong hand on her head, and turned her face up till their eyes met.

"Is it so, child?"

"It is true," said she, "that there is nothing I would not do or suffer to heal this quarrel,—to persuade angry people that nothing that is cruel can come from the King. He must have money, I suppose : the people will not give him any—"

"Tush !" cried Cousin Oliver. "The child is puffed up with vanity."

Her father held up a warning finger ; and Henrietta, blushing, said she had gone further than became her in such a presence ; but she only intended to say that merciful kings sometimes had cruel servants ; and then they were blamed for severities of which they knew nothing. Cousin Oliver intimated that this was not a discovery left for young damsels to make ; and neighbour Urrey laughed insultingly. On this Dr. Giles remarked that it was, in his eyes, more seemly to

see an over-tenderness towards the royal family than an over-readiness to judge them. If he knew the young members of this family, they were on the side of grace and devotion, rather than rude censure of those in high places.

"How is it with you, my child?" Mr. Hampden asked, when Henrietta was presently lost in thought.

"I was considering," she answered, in a confidential whisper, "how all might be healed if I could be, as you said, an attendant spirit. If I had the fairy gift of a purse of treasure, always full, how soon I might appease all this trouble, and give the King all he wants, so that the people might take no heed to parliaments."

"That would be no sacrifice," her father objected. "I thought your desire was for self-sacrifice. Am I right? Well, then, there is something better in your grasp than fairy gifts. Could you give up the fortune you have been promised? Could you dress and work like a woman of a lower station? Could you leave this house and park, and pass your days in a street of a town? I ask you this seriously, Henrietta."

"I would try," she answered. "But this saving would be but little to present to the King."

"There is another way of serving him, besides giving him presents," her father whispered. He was himself about to ascertain the law and right in a way which must convince the King or the people, and put them in the right way. But so much of his estate and fortune might be lost in the trial, that his children would have either to forgive him or to work and endure with him. Henrietta was the one of all his children for whom he felt the most sorrow and the strongest compassion, if ruin should come to pass. She was about to reply, but he counselled her to make no pledge till she had reflected. Then he blessed her, and rose to lead the way once more to the library, where his councillors followed him. Richard was beckoned in by Mr. Hampden.

The consultation was long and most grave. Mr. Pym cheer-

fully told how strong was the resentment in Somersetshire. Cousin Oliver Cromwell showed that in the Fens, and he believed in the whole range of the Eastern Counties, public opinion needed only direction ; and he charged himself with organizing an Eastern Counties Association ; and though he had left Huntingdon, his influence there remained, to be put to use. Lord Brook answered for Northamptonshire, where, with the aid of the Knightleys, a strong opposition could be set up to the aggressions of the King's party. Each gentleman present had information which showed that the Scotch were disposed to go any lengths in repudiating the imposition of Episcopacy, and the tyranny of the English Pope, Archbishop Laud. If war were necessary for this end, the people of Scotland were ready for war. Neighbour Urrey declared himself ashamed that the mention of war should have come first from beyond Berwick. If the English were as brave, they would, ere this, have marched upon London, and dictated terms to the King, and sent the Queen's popish followers packing to the Continent. No one present approved of such haste and violence. It was indispensable to the cause of the nation that every breach of the laws should come from the King's side ; and it ought to be supposed to the latest moment that the King would at length call a parliament when the Courts should have declared the law in Mr. Hampden's case, and when the King should be convinced that the ship-money could not be levied, and that further grants of monopolies would not be tolerated. Urrey's scorn of this patience could be well endured when the whole council were against him ; and no one cared to resent his declaration that he believed that every one of them would, in a few months, be won over by the false promises of the King, and the blandishments and popish arts of the Queen. He was silenced at length by the rebuke of Dr. Giles, who reminded him that the resistance now to be organized was a religious work, into which no passion, and no disloyalty might enter : and Oliver plainly told

him that he, for one, would walk by the guidance of the Spirit, and not by the wrath of the flesh. It was decided, finally, that each should work in his own province while awaiting the action against Mr. Hampden ; and that, whenever notice was received of the trial being definitively ordered, the present Council should meet again at Sir Richard Knightley's, at Fawsley. Richard engaged to proceed homewards without delay, and prepare his father for the part he was known to be willing to act in the struggle which seemed to be now inevitable. Late as the hour was, Dr. Giles strengthened their hearts and calmed their spirits by reading the Word and by prayer ; and, late as the hour was, Mr. Hampden requested Richard to remain in the library when the neighbours, Dr. Giles and Mr. Urrey, had gone home, and the other guests had retired to their chambers.

Mr. Hampden wrote for a few moments at his desk, and then summoned Richard to his side. He put into his hand a bill for four thousand pounds ; and when his son-in-law looked in his face for an explanation, he said :

"This sum is the amount which I designed that Margaret should receive at my death. In the present peril of my fortunes, it will be a relief to my mind that your reasonable expectations should be fulfilled, and Margaret's portion put beyond the reach of any enemy. Yes," he continued, in reply to Richard's remonstrance at his thus reducing his income during his life, "I have not overlooked the inconvenience of my income being reduced by this endowment of my elder daughters (for Henrietta's portion shall be secured in like manner), but if my property is left to me, it will be a small misfortune that it is somewhat impaired ; and if I am to be beggared, it will be an ease to my mind that you and Harry Carewe have received your due."

"Beggared, my dear father !" exclaimed Richard.

"It may not be so, Richard ; but it also may. You heard Mr. Pym relate how the Lord Deputy Wentworth has accom-

plished the ruin of Lord Mountnorris, and with what favour he is treated at Court in consequence. If the King made him relate the whole process twice over, to himself first, and then before the Council, and if this policy is favoured as being thorough, it is plain that the same course will be followed with every man who is prosecuted for more reason than Lord Mountnorris ever gave."

"It is said, however, that the King himself selected your name, sir, when the list of recusants was put before him, on account of the respect he bears you. Is not this a sign that the King intends the trial to be a fair challenge before the law?"


"If the King had shown in any one particular a deference towards the law, I should gladly interpret his choice as you and some others do; but there are reasons which seem to me weightier for believing that he selects a man of some influence, in order to bring his prerogative to bear with a more crushing weight."

"It is a dreadful thought!" exclaimed Richard.

"These are times in which no dread can be admitted into the minds of honest men," Mr. Hampden replied, cheerfully. "If my friend Eliot die, the first great martyr in the cause which will have many martyrs, his friend Hampden may well be willing to be a confessor, in the mere sacrifice of money and lands,—and of this home, if need be. Henrietta told me that the place never looked so lovely as she saw it this evening. It seemed so to me as I gazed down upon it from the hills yesterday; but I looked upon it as lent for our present use and our present joy; and if we must soon—my children and I—live close, and in a mean style, in some street or cottage, we can be content while we live in the brightness of love and a quiet conscience. I do not doubt my children, Richard."

As Richard was silent, his father-in-law looked in his face.

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Richard had no doubt of the dutifulness, on any hand, nor of the affection of the whole family towards their father. But, of the domestic harmony and the quiet conscience he could not be sure when he thought of Henrietta. He told all that had passed at Port Eliot; and a great gravity passed over the calm and benign countenance of Mr. Hampden as he listened. His remark at the close was that there was always something to fear when a lively and jesting spirit in a man was married to a lively and romantic spirit in a woman: but the peril was in themselves; and whether their temptation seemed to come from a public conflict between liberty and prerogative, or from the trifling incidents of every-day life, was of less consequence than might appear. The young couple loved each other, so that no parent could think of separating them. If they should at length find their two modes of loyalty irreconcilable, they must preserve their loyalty to each other by withdrawing from the scene of strife. This had been in his mind, Mr. Hampden said, when he entered so largely into the scheme of Lord Say and Sele, and Lord Brook, of a settlement in the Isle of Providence. At Saybrook, which would have become a town in another year, Harry and his wife would find scope for their great energies, without excuse for domestic disagreement when so far from the war of tyranny on the one hand, and discontent on the other. He thanked Richard for his warning, which he accepted, he said, as an injunction to watch over his noble-hearted child as father and mother in one. When he dismissed his son-in-law to his short rest (for the dawn was already in the sky), he hinted to him, with a smile, that if Henrietta seemed to engross a large share of his anxiety and tenderness, it was because of the need in her case. In Margaret he had a friend, on whom his heart and mind might repose. Unbroken contentment was the blessing which she conferred. Her father and her husband might speak of this together, though the privilege was too sacred to be easily discussed with others.

Thus, with full but tranquil hearts, they parted for the short remainder of the night.

Margaret was not to be persuaded to stay behind her husband. She preferred the fatigue to separation ; and by the time the household assembled for worship, she and Richard were some miles on their way to Fawsley.

## CHAPTER V.

### A CERTAIN NOVEMBER IN MERRY ENGLAND.

THE fifth of November 1637 was as noisy a day all over England as any fifth of November since 1605. Perhaps it was the most tumultuous of all the anniversaries of the Gunpowder Treason, for reasons which belonged to the year. The main roads leading to London were thronged, and in London, lodgings were scarce and dear. It was something new that a case in the law-courts should so largely increase the population of London in the dampest and dreariest month of the year ; but, as some people asked, had there ever been a law case of such public importance before ? The trial of Mr. Hampden, for refusing to pay ship-money to the amount of twenty shillings, was to come on in the Exchequer Court on the 6th of November : and the expectation was, that if Mr. Hampden should chance to win his cause, he would be tried again for refusing to pay thirty shillings, in respect of his property in another district. All England was in waiting for the judgment that should be passed ; and all England and Scotland were waiting to see what would follow from the punishments in Palace-Yard, which were quite as vehemently talked of as the ship-money. Some gentlemen of character, education, and ability as authors, had been pilloried and mutilated, in accordance with a Star-chamber sentence, procured by Archbishop Laud ; and the restraint thus put upon men's tongues, and the cruelty which showed itself in the temper of the leading Gospel minister of the kingdom, thrilled through the whole heart of



the nation. Thus, many as were the travellers from all parts going up to attend Mr. Hampden's trial, or to learn all particulars on the spot, there were nearly as many more who used that cause as a pretext for meeting and consulting with others who were no more reconciled to the tyranny of Churchmen under a Stuart, than their fathers had been under a Tudor. The occasion was too good not to be seized by Scotch leaders for coming to an understanding with English Puritans ; and by men who had not forgotten what a parliament was, to consult with newly risen patriots about obtaining another ; and by the country members of the King's party, to parade their loyalty in the eyes of the Court and the judges. Added to these, there were ladies and gallant gentlemen who relished the prospect of a gay season in London at the beginning of the winter, and cared more for assemblies, and banquets, and balls, than for the honour of the Crown and the safety of the country. Some of all these orders of persons made up the throng which kept the inns busy, and the roads in their worst condition, on the fifth of that November. In former years, the innkeepers had driven a good trade on that day by pretending to suppose that every traveller who did not desire to toast the King at every stage was a Papist. This time, there was perhaps more ale and good wine asked for than in any former year ; but the increase was in no proportion to the numbers ; and it was agreed by all the hosts along the road, that the Papists had grown audacious. Whether it was the favour of the Queen towards the Papists, or their trust in the protection of the High Church, with Laud at the summit of it, they certainly did not, through meekness and fear, drink more on that day than they had a mind to.

While the stream of travellers thus set strongly towards London, a small party was riding eastwards which fixed the attention of the innkeepers on the road by their crossing the route of all the rest, by their having no questions to ask on the great affair of the day, and by the livery of the servant who was

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Henrietta bestirred herself to pack his portmanteau.

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in attendance on the lady of the party. The groom in green livery put on grand airs of mystery wherever he stopped, and let it be known that he could give, instead of needing, information about the gentleman who was to be tried in London. He drew attention to his livery, and when asked about it, said that the inquirers might find out whose service he was in, it not being his business to tell. Thus challenged, curious people did find out that the livery was Mr. Hampden's, and consequently that the lady was Mr. Hampden's daughter. It was indeed Henrietta : and the news spread before the party, so that all hope of passing unobserved was at an end, and so much attention was offered at every stage, that Henrietta's desire to finish her journey as soon as possible made her regardless of all fatigue. Her eldest brother Philip and her maid were her companions ; and Philip was well pleased to push on, as he was anxious to be in London as soon as possible after the opening of the trial. A hindrance occurred which vexed him for a moment ; but it was the cause of his release a day sooner than he had expected.

He was escorting his sister to the mansion of old Sir Oliver Cromwell in the Fens. Old Sir Oliver was their great-uncle ; and of all his relations, Henrietta was his favourite. He had made overtures towards adopting her, when the troubles of the time were dividing families, and when relatives and friends grouped themselves by their sympathies, rather than by the nearness of their family ties. From the time of Margaret's marriage Henrietta had never entertained the idea of leaving her father, who could ill spare the solace of an elder daughter's presence : but Henrietta was now in trouble ; and for the sake of the whole family she found it best to hide herself and her griefs in her old uncle's house far away. At Huntingdon, she was within an easy ride of Biggin House, Sir Oliver's mansion : but there she was obliged to stop. The place was so full, and in such a state of agitation, that no horses could be had. There was nothing to be done but to stay there for the night.

While the brother and sister were consulting whether or not to disturb their great-aunt, Mrs. Cromwell, who lived retired at Huntingdon, they were joined by Cousin Oliver, who had heard that Mr. Hampden's livery was in the town, and at once sought out the young people. He told them that there was no inn in the town which was fit for Henrietta to pass the night in ; and he bade them be thankful that his mother's house was open to them as a refuge. He insisted on their accompanying him there without delay ; and they were as glad to do so as he could desire. It was a drawback that they could not appear in the street without having a crowd for an escort, but the distance was inconsiderable. As they issued from the inn yard, the crowd raised a cheer for the Lord of the Fens. Cousin Oliver lifted his hand ; and there was silence in a moment.

"I will not be called Lord of the Fens," he declared, in a voice which was heard to the end of the street, "I am lord of nothing ; and no man is Lord of the Fens. I will tell you in public meeting this day what Lord you shall praise for the great work which has been done in our Fen land, and what other Lord you shall withstand in his pride about those doings. Come, one and all, and hear what shall then be said ; but my will now is to pass quietly whither I am going. Fall back, and be silent till I return among you within one hour ;—perhaps," and he pointed to the church clock at hand, "within half-an-hour from the striking of the clock."

The people fell back, and ceased cheering ; but there was no preventing them from following ; and when the party reached the old dame's modest house, she was seen at the window, brought there by the hum of many voices, and the tramp of many feet. When she saw her son at the entrance, the door flew open, and Henrietta was glad to rush into the quiet of a private house.

She was kindly welcomed, in consideration of the hand that brought her. In a few minutes she was alone with her hostess. Cousin Oliver engaged to forward her to Biggin House the

next day ; and Philip Hampden was thus free to make his way to London as soon as his horse was sufficiently rested to proceed.

"Shall I bear your greeting to our father?" he asked his sister, as he bade her farewell. "Do not look reproachfully at me. I do not doubt your love : but may I tell him that he has your prayers for his release from the persecution of the wicked?"

"Tell him, with my humble duty," she replied, "that I pray daily for his health and peaceful deliverance from all trouble. He knows how I pray that right may prevail."

"That is his prayer ; that is the prayer of everyone on his side," Philip replied. "Beseech the Lord, Henrietta, that the wicked may be confounded, and that the kingdom may have peace."

"But how shall we learn from day to day," asked Henrietta, "how the trial proceeds? You say it may be many days. Cannot a messenger bring us tidings? And how often?"

Philip smiled and told her that there would be no part of the country,—no village, however remote, to which the news of each day's proceedings would not spread as fast as man and horse could carry the tidings. He reminded her of the great number of poor men who were in prison for the same cause, besides the richer citizens whose estates were threatened for their opposition to the ship-money. Among others, the owners of the new properties in the Fens were almost to a man against the King's demands : and they had swift messengers ready to pass to and fro day and night.

Dame Cromwell, overhearing this, said that the swiftest messengers of all were engaged. Pigeons abounded among the granaries all along the Ouse ; and numbers of them had been carried to London, after having been trained for weeks past. She added that no household was more sure of daily tidings than Sir Oliver's. If Henrietta did not know why, she would surely and speedily learn.

Henrietta so well knew why, that she was glad, when left alone with the old lady, to find the discourse turn on other subjects.

The old lady stood hearkening till her son, and the crowd which followed him, had left the street. Then she said :

"My son will not permit himself to be called Lord of the Fens ; but it is not for him to choose how men shall consider him, any more than what the Lord shall appoint him to do."

"Is this recovery of the Fens his work then ?" Henrietta asked.

"Not more than it is Sir Oliver's, and many another man's. The adventurers as a body, with the Earl of Bedford at their head, have, and deserve to have, the credit of reclaiming the land. My son has his share of that honour ; but it is for a more perilous work that the country—his own eastern country—gives him that title. Have you not heard of it, my dear ?"

"I heard of some trouble, as one hears of trouble on every hand," said Henrietta, sighing.

"Trouble everywhere from wickedness in high places," the dame observed. "The adventurers have spent out of their fortunes more money than you would believe ;—more money than some of them could have raised but for the prospect of profitable estates which should pay for everything. Among them they were to possess, according to their Charter, ninety-five thousand acres of the new land ; and, now that their money is spent, and they should be entering into possession, the King . . ."

Henrietta turned away her head impatiently and her hostess stopped short.

"Pardon me !" said Henrietta. "I was dismayed for the moment,—dismayed that, whatever happens, men's minds take hold of it, to turn it to complaint against the King."

"Let the King keep his royal word, my young cousin, and men's complaints would be as the idle wind. But with the adventurers in the Levels he has broken faith by so heavily

taxing their estates that, if he carries his measures against them, many of them will be ruined men. While the dispute lasts, due care of the new works is neglected ; and if it be not speedily settled, the waters will encroach again ; and the fair fields which you will see to-morrow will be mere swamp, more muddy and unwholesome than before."

"It will be only like the rest of the country," sighed Henrietta. "The whole kingdom seems to be in the way to become—"

"To become what?" the dame inquired, with evident curiosity.

"No place for dutiful men to live in," Henrietta replied.

"Too true!" the dame agreed. "Dutiful men and women are making up their minds to suffer and die, because of the wickedness in high places: but good citizens will struggle manfully for the right. My son has the whole eastern country with him in this matter of the Levels; and the cause is so clear, and the people are so resolved that a handful of courtiers shall not ruin such a work, that they will sustain my son against all trespassers, even if the King himself be one. It would be well that the King should hear whom they call the Lord of the Fens."

Henrietta trusted that the King would hear at the same time that Cousin Oliver refused the title.

The old lady perceived that the subject was in some way unwelcome, and from a sense of hospitality she dropped it. In the course of the evening, however, it became clear that no topic could interest her long which did not lead round to her son Oliver. When Henrietta spoke of her father's belief that his cousin Oliver would be a great man in the country, as he already was in the eyes of the family, the Puritan mother's godly jealousy was aroused by the awakening of old associations. Her mind was carried back to the days when the cousins were boys and under her rule. She observed, with some sternness—



"I do not know why Oliver's friends beset him with flatteries. I am sure he required the rod as much as any of his six sisters. There was no end to my trouble with him."

"And now see your reward!" Henrietta observed. "I have heard my father say how noble and brave a nature was always struggling under—"

"Under what?" sharply asked the dame.

"Under what appeared to require the rod. Nay, Aunt Cromwell, I refer only to what you yourself have just said. No one honours his standing now more than my father."

"Of course; all the world honours it," replied the dame; "all whose respect is true honour. As for the King and the Court, how should they know how to honour a God-fearing man and a soldier of liberty! Ah! if such a man as Oliver could be king—"

"Such as Cousin Oliver be king!" exclaimed Henrietta, amused.

"Yes, my young cousin. If worldlings and perjured Papists could give place, but for five years, to a servant of the Lord, like my Oliver, this land might be redeemed in its swift course to perdition. I do not speak as of anything probable, and by your countenance one might see that I was speaking folly. But there have been times when kings have been of the Lord's appointing,—by the head and shoulders taller than other men, as Saul, when the Lord gave a king first to His people. There have been things more strange than that a man who obtains a natural obedience as Lord of the Fens, while living in the fens, should be the ruler of the country when he shows his strength through the whole country."

Henrietta was in fact smiling. She smiled again at the idea when Cousin Oliver appeared at the supper table in time to say the long grace, and when he returned thanks, in the evening prayer, for the power which the Word had had through his poor utterance, in strengthening the people to stand for their liberties. He prayed for the King, however; for his long life,

and his rescue from the snares which would make him an enemy to the pure reformed Church. Henrietta could only hope that Aunt Cromwell could join in this prayer as sincerely as her son evidently offered it.

Henrietta, heavy at heart as she was, smiled again at the same image when Cousin Oliver put her on her horse early the next morning. She had been to the old lady's bedside to bid her farewell, and had received her well-meant injunctions not to be ensnared by the graces of old Sir Oliver, or by the conversation of any Royalists she might meet at his house. If she should hear a word in defence of ship-money, or of the late meddling with the religion of Scotland, she had only to ride over to Huntingdon, and take refuge with her old aunt. She would know when to flee to this refuge, by hearing her own father disrespectfully spoken of—

"That will never happen in my presence, in any one of the family houses," Henrietta declared.

"Perhaps not," the dame said. "But there is the other case. You have heard of Jenny Geddes, and what she did about the collects—"

"Took the collect to be colic; and administered her joint-stool as a cure?"

"It is an over-serious case for a jest," the dame remarked. "I was about to say that if Jenny Geddes is made a mock of in your presence, you will find a refuge here for your wounded feelings. While your father stands up against them that trouble the Lord's people, every child of his may look upon my house as a home."

Henrietta kissed the old lady's hand, thanked her, and was departing, when she was recalled for one more exhortation. Her hostess had not been insensible to the depression which had appeared in her countenance and manner. It was dutiful to grieve for a parent's troubles; but such grief should be swallowed up in joy that a father should be honoured by being made a confessor in a great cause; so that if John Hampden

should be this day consigned to prison, to die there like his friend Eliot, a dutiful daughter ought to give thanks on that very account every day of her life.

Henrietta could not bear this,—her heart knowing its own bitterness, and her dutifulness being by no means of the supposed quality. When she appeared in the court, her colour was high, and her eyes were full of tears ; but again she smiled at the thought of Cousin Oliver enacting royalty. His grim face, his yeoman's suit, and his abrupt manner, were as opposite as possible to all the notions she had gathered from Lady Carlisle, and her Aunt Carewe, and from her own fancy as to the bearing of a king.

Yet there was something kingly in Cousin Oliver's position in his own district. Without apology to his companions, he stopped where it pleased him, and diverged from the road where it suited him. He examined the embankments ; he dismounted to measure the depth of the water ; he tried the firmness of the soil wherever it looked suspicious. As if by magic, people collected wherever he halted for a moment. On casting a glance over the wide plain, so lately under water, and still glistening here and there with meres and full watercourses, it seemed as if the whole area was uninhabited, except where a farmstead or a group of cottages stood forth conspicuously. Yet men and women collected by scores and by hundreds. They came up from the decoys ; they came out from behind the embankments ; they sprang ashore from the boats on the Ouse ;—there were men from the ploughtail ; there were women from the dairies and poultry yards ; there were boys with their birding-traps, and their dogs from hunting vermin. Little children with rushen helmets and bows and arrows ran along to keep up with the horses, in hope of a word or a look from the Lord of the Fens. For everybody who, as Cousin Oliver said, had ears to hear, he had one exhortation to give—to pay no penny of the new taxes till the case was settled ; but to stand fast in refusal, even as Mr. Hampden

who was tried to-day in London for refusing to pay ship-money.

The journey became slower from mile to mile ; and by mid-day Cousin Oliver declared that this would not do. He commissioned some of the people to spread the tidings along the road, and back among the farms, that he would return before night, and hear those who had aught to say to him, at certain stations. He must now ride straight for Biggin House. This settled, the party set forward at a good pace.

Cousin Oliver was not to reach Biggin House to-day. From a cross road, five miles short of it, he saw a party approaching, and presently distinguished the livery of the Mashams, who were cousins of his. The servants who bore it were escorting their young mistress, Helen Masham, who was on her way to Biggin House, where she was to be Henrietta's companion. The damsels, formerly playmates, were delighted to meet ; and Cousin Oliver perceived that he was no longer wanted. He sent a dutiful message to his uncle, gave his blessing very devoutly to his young kinswomen, turned his horse's head, and rode away at speed.

Biggin House did not look very tempting from the outside, on this foggy November day. The grass in the park was coarse and dank ; the dead leaves lay thick in what had been the avenue ; the trees stood irregularly, as the best of them had been felled : some were lying on their sides, overgrown with fungus and moss ; and those which were standing were bare, and many of them half dead. The moat was overfull of turbid water ; and some of the woodwork of the drawbridge had fallen into it. The house had a mouldy appearance on the open side ; and where the trees sheltered the other walls, the blackened old bricks and stone mullions were streaked with green moss from breaches in the rotting spouts above. Things were better inside, however ; and, besides a blazing fire in the great hall, there was abundance of warmth in the welcome the old gentleman had ready for his kinswomen.

"On my life, a pretty brace of Puritans as ever I saw," said he, giving each of them a hearty hug; "and as good as you are pretty, to come and be company to your solitary old uncle in fog-time. We must have a bargain. You find all the duty; and I must see whether I cannot find some pleasure without waiting for Christmas. We do contrive to brighten up the old place at Christmas; but we will have a dance between this day and that. Hey, Henrietta! You have not grown too starched for a dance, I hope."

"My dear uncle, no!" Henrietta replied. "We dance every evening at home in cold weather."

"Who dances? Not your grim father?"

"My father is never grim, uncle. How can you fancy it? He is our favourite partner; and he favours us all round."

"Right good, my dear! And Aunt Carewe?"

"Yes, she dances, when she is not playing for us. We are so many at home that we can make out a country dance without guests, when by chance no guests are there."

"On my life, I am glad to hear it. By John Hampden's surliness about the King's affairs I was afraid he had gone gospel-mad, like his cousin Oliver. You never see *him* dance, I will warrant."

The girls laughed.

"If you got him to stand up, he would break out into praying, instead of making the figure. He would twang out a grace before dancing, loud enough to drown the music. Now tell me, Henrietta, were you not ashamed to be seeriding with such a cavalier? You, Helen; were you not glad that he turned whence he came? Why, you would have seen your grooms laughing behind his back."

Helen hastened to explain that all the servants of all the Mashams revered Cousin Oliver, and would on no account jest at his expense. Henrietta, being questioned, admitted that his boots were muddy, and his coat rusty, and his beaver





"I agree with you," said Sir Oliver. "This is no proper banquetting-hall for princes."

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battered ; but so far from being ashamed of him, she had felt as if in a great man's train, all the way from Huntingdon. Sir Oliver listened courteously while she related the incidents of the journey, and then observed :

"Ay! they do call him the Lord of the Fens, the disloyal wretches ! When the fogs are gone, and the land is in its spring green, we must get the real Lord of the Fens to come."

"The Earl of Bedford?" Helen asked.

"Bless my soul, no ! We will give the people something better than an Earl to look at. No, child, I mean the King. And why not? His father came to me at Hinchinbrooke, once upon a time, to hunt ; and he, and the Queen too, may come here to hawk. Our fowling here is sport for a king, I can tell you : and it is a rare country for the Queen's hawks, if she will come and try."

The girls looked at each other in some dismay at the thought of having to play hostess to such a party.

"I agree with you," said Sir Oliver, looking round upon the somewhat dingy walls and shabby furniture of the great dining-room in which they sat. "This is no proper banqueting-hall for princes. But I lost a fortune twice over in entertaining the Court all day, and in gaming with them at night : and the King knows that poor old Sir Oliver is a wrecked man. He would take kindly what I have to offer, and excuse shortcomings. Times are altered with him too, as with his friends. He finds shortcomings everywhere, and no offers. But I must not forget that I am talking to little Puritans. If I trouble them with an old man's loyalty, they will be running away, and telling all I say to the crop-ears."

"Uncle Oliver, you do not know me," Henrietta said, very emphatically, and with a flushing cheek.

Helen observed that there was nobody of her acquaintance, she believed, who did not wish to serve and please the King within the limits of an Englishman's duty.



If so, Sir Oliver replied, all was well. They would drink His Majesty's health, with one voice, every day. Meanwhile his young cousins must make themselves at home in their own apartments; and he summoned servants to show them the way.

As they were leaving the room, Henrietta's turn came last to make her curtsy at the door; and she was beckoned back with such caution as to show her she was to return alone. The old man took her in his arms, seated her on his knee, and said in her ear:

"This is the way we used to tell each other our secrets when you were just high enough to peep into this pocket. Come! tell me your little secret now. What is this between you and Harry Carewe? There! you can hide your face against my shoulder, as you did when I told you ghost stories. And now tell me what is the matter about Harry Carewe."

"I thought you knew, uncle. I thought—"

"I have heard something; but I want to hear your account of it. Is Harry a disloyal rascal?"

"O, no, no! Do not blame Harry. I dare say I am more to blame than Harry. I know Aunt Carewe thinks so."

"Likely enough!"

"But my father thinks so too; and I believe it is true. But, uncle, we cannot live together. So we have parted."

"If Harry is not a disloyal rascal, why have you parted? I don't understand."

"I know I am to blame; but my temper will not stand the things he says. And he thinks the same of his temper.—What things? O! I cannot tell you about them. I cannot bear to think of them. He thinks that things are right which I think wrong; and—"

"And he is hard upon the King?—No! Then he is hard upon the Queen?"

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"Not so much that as—— In short, uncle, we think so differently about all these quarrels, in which everybody that belongs to us has some share, that we were always losing patience with each other. That was it."

"If that was all, my darling, everybody that belongs to you will lose patience with you both. I suppose you love each other. Well, well! there is nothing to say about that, I see. Two young creatures in love, and quarrelling, not for any jealousy."

"Only jealousy about their Majesties, uncle. I cannot bear to hear such things as they all say—"

"Ay, ay! I knew how it was: and so you come for refuge to your old uncle as a true Loyalist. Your uncle is proud of you, my love. As for Master Harry, he shall know—"

"O, uncle! let Harry alone! Do not say a word to him! He thinks he is right; and I know I have tried him. And we can never meet again. Let me live quietly with you here. However this trial in London may end, my father will not be often at Hampden this winter. If he gains his cause, he will have business in Scotland—"

"Ha! what takes him there? Is he going to make his bow to Jenny Geddes? If he does, that stool of hers shall be his stool of repentance."

"There is some public business which will detain him there," Henrietta went on: "and Aunt Carewe will not leave the children; and I could not bear—"

"I see; you could neither keep up your friendship with her nor deprive her of Harry's presence. This is clearly the home for you at present, my love; and I rejoice to have you here. But, Henrietta, you must cheer up. When His Majesty has brought his perverse children back to their duty, Harry will come back to his. I may not put it so? Well, then, I will put it the other way: you and Harry will come back to each other."

"Never! never!" Henrietta insisted. "Never! never!" she repeated to herself as she went to her chamber, and while she was settling herself there as in her permanent home. She did not see how she could ever return to Hampden till Harry should be married to someone more worthy of him than herself. Dear Hampden! she should never see it more till she should be old and grave, and past feeling things so strongly. Her youth would be spent here in the Fens; and when Uncle Oliver was in his grave, and she should have ceased to have cares because she would have ceased to have feelings, she should return to Hampden, to watch over Aunt Carewe in her old age, and be a daughter to her, though Harry would have long had another wife.

"Never! never!" she said again to Helen as at night, when they should have been asleep, they were sitting together by the fire in Henrietta's chamber. It struck her that she had to repeat this assurance very often. Her family seemed all of one mind about her affairs,—all confident that Harry and she would come together again. But perhaps she would never have to contradict Helen upon it after this night. When she had relieved her mind of the whole story to this friend of her whole life,—when she had related all that had been said by Harry and by herself, and what bitter things she was conscious of having uttered, and how desperate Harry's feelings had become under her sarcasms,—Helen did not repeat her belief that such evils could disappear and leave no trace. Henrietta said that passion might be mutually forgiven; but how could she be sure that passion would not be roused again,—that there would not be more sarcasms, and more misery from them, Helen fervently agreed. The present pain was the least, great as it was. Henrietta was quite right in stopping in time: and all the rest were quite wrong in trying to persuade two young people, who could not be happy for a month at a time now, to run the risk of spending their lives together.

"They say," suggested Henrietta, "that public affairs must be settled very soon; and then the danger will be over. When the King has taught the people their duty, and established his right . . ."

"Who says that?" asked Helen. "Not your father,—not Lady Carewe?"

"Uncle Oliver said so to-day; and I know Lord Wentworth thinks so. Lady Carlisle gives it out everywhere."

"On the other hand," said Helen, "your father and mine, and every public man they have confidence in, are no less confident that the victory will be the other way. When the King is humbled so far as to summon his parliament . . . What is the matter? O! in this part of the country we do not regard the proclamation against naming the parliament. My father says we might as well leave off speaking of the Bible by order of the Pope. As I was saying . . ."

"No matter!" Henrietta interrupted. "I know what you would say."

Helen persevered so far as to ask whether it was not too serious a risk to commit the happiness of a marriage to the chances of a political strife,—some called it a rebellion, and some a revolution,—on the issue of which no two wise men were agreed. She considered Henrietta right in her decision,—noble-minded, generous, and prudent.

"I am so glad . . ." sobbed Henrietta, as her head lay on Helen's shoulder. "I am so glad . . ." And the sobs came thicker, and the tears in floods.

Puritans as the Mashams were, they had read certain stage plays of a writer who was much thought of at the time; and one line of a tragedy of that player's now darted across Helen's memory; "Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much!" and her heart smote her.

"I cannot bear to grieve you," she said. "But you have done so nobly and so wisely, that it is due to you to say that I agree with you."

"Of course you must say what you think," replied Henrietta; "I am so glad . . ."

Still she was unable to express the cause of her satisfaction. She was obliged to let Helen lay her in her bed ; and then she was soothed by Helen's singing a hymn familiar in the household worship at home, and apt to operate like a spell in reducing passion to a calm.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE IRISH LORD DEPUTY IN MERRY ENGLAND.

THE apparatus of carrier-pigeons was but little employed, after all. For the first two or three days of the trial of Mr. Hampden, the agitation throughout the kingdom was excessive: and for many more days the citizens went on saying that it was the most important cause that had ever been tried in Westminster Hall. But the dulness, and the long protraction of the arguments had their natural effect on the commonalty of England. Attorney-General Noy, though long in his grave, was burnt in effigy, as he had been every year since he devised the tax of ship-money: bets were laid by the King's party on the lawyers who were opposed to each other in the cause: prayer-meetings were held in Puritan dwellings for the restraining of the King's unlawful power: "diurnal writers" were reaping a harvest, from the demand of their services by leading public men who wished to keep their respective districts punctually informed of the aspect and incidents of the trial; and the families of the lawyers, as well as of the recusants who were represented by Mr. Hampden, grew restless towards the close of every day, till the end. But the general public presently found that they could not understand the legal arguments; and when assured that some weeks might pass before there was a verdict, and some months before there was a sentence (in case of Mr. Hampden being defeated), they spared themselves the trouble and expense of their winged messengers, and waited very willingly till the hint should pass round that they were wanted for the defence of the nation's liberties.

There was rapid travelling, however, on all the great roads, during that November. Gentlemen of both parties exercised their public spirit in compassing the speedy passage of news,—placing relays of horses, and sometimes riding themselves; especially when they could thus spend their Sundays at home. The wide-spread family connection of the Cromwells included St. John, the lawyer, who defended his relative, Mr. Hampden, in such a way as to make the whole family very proud and hopeful of him and his cause. Sir Oliver himself wavered in his wishes when nephew St. John's law and eloquence were extolled by visitors and in letters, consoling himself beforehand in his own way for whatever might be the result. If His Majesty gained the cause, it would be a glorious thing; and John Hampden would be no worse in the end. He would lose some money; and he might be under a bar and bolt for a time, which would be the proper reward of his wilfulness: but he was too much of a gentleman to be personally ill-treated for a matter of twenty shillings. If John Hampden should win, no matter, if gentlemen would but treat such a decision with the contempt it deserved. That the King would do so there could be no doubt. He must have money; and he would take it in his own royal way, whatever St. John and the Judges might say. As for St. John, he was a made man. It did not follow that his politics were wrong because he spoke on the other side. A lawyer must speak on the side which engages him; and next time, he would be more eloquent still, because he would have a better cause.

Sir Oliver would not be satisfied without hearing whatever Henrietta would tell him of her father's letters to her; and Henrietta was as ready to read as her old uncle to hear. Her heart overflowed with love and gratitude to her father, whose thoughts were so much with her that he passed no one day of the trial without writing at least a few words to her. He suffered almost as she did under her trouble; and he felt that no duty could intercept that of supporting his motherless child

under the frustration of her intended marriage. When Henrietta had read her uncle what she could out of those precious sheets which arrived almost daily, he swore that it was a thousand pities that a gentleman who had so loyal a heart should have let any Puritan scoundrels make a tool of him in the sight of all England ; and he bade Helen pray, if she must pray outside the service-book, that John Hampden might have the seven devils cast out of him, and return to his duty. Helen quietly replied that she did pray for Mr. Hampden,—that he might be delivered from the devils who were, not within him, but about him.

Though the family interest in such a trial could not die out, the family alarm diminished day by day. It was impossible that a gentleman as much extolled for his modesty and gentle dignity by the one party, as for his public spirit by the other, should meet with any ignominious treatment : but still, when the moment came, Henrietta could not ask the news. Her maid informed her, as she was dressing for dinner, that a dark gentleman had ridden up, in great haste, wishing to speak with Sir Oliver without dismounting : but Sir Oliver was out woodcock-shooting, which vexed the gentleman so as to make him swear terribly. He had thrown himself from his horse, however, and demanded to be furnished with writing materials in a chamber, where he was certainly dressing ; for his servant was now attending on him. The servant would not tell his master's name, nor let his livery be seen.

This part of the story did not fix Henrietta's attention ; for gentlemen who swore terribly when vexed, and rode up unexpectedly, were of almost daily occurrence at Biggin House. It was the stranger's intention of riding on, after telling his news, which agitated her. The two girls appeared, when summoned, with a heightened colour and a troubled manner.

The dark gentleman was with Sir Oliver. Henrietta knew him in a moment, and whispered to Helen that it was Lord Wentworth.



"Do you know whom we have the honour of entertaining, young ladies?" asked Sir Oliver.

Henrietta named him as she made her reverent curtsy. Being asked by his lordship whether he ought to have recognised her, she innocently replied that Lady Carlisle had shown her a portrait which left no room for doubt. The name of Lady Carlisle, and the name of Hampden each bespoke Lord Wentworth's graciousness; and he at once applied himself to soften to Henrietta the blow of hearing that the trial had ended unfavourably for her father. He said that there would be no present result to himself, and none of any serious consequence at any time: and if he should lose a little money, he had gained, on the other hand, a treasure of honour and praise. The judges themselves had declared that they could scarcely quarrel with the event which had fixed the eyes of all England on Mr. Hampden, seeing that the temper and demeanour of so noble a gentleman was the best rebuke that could be given to the low sectaries and seditious brawlers who troubled the King's reign.

In the course of dinner Sir Oliver relieved his lordship of the fear that Henrietta would be overwhelmed by the event of the trial. He extolled her for as loyal a damsel as existed outside of the Court. This removed all constraint; and Lord Wentworth spoke as openly of what had passed as his hearers listened eagerly. He could have wished, he said, that the twelve judges had been loyal without exception. That three of them should have countenanced the popular undutifulness would spoil the flavour of victory to the King.

"What possessed them to desert the King?" Sir Oliver inquired. "Their ermine should be pulled over their heads," he concluded; "that is my opinion."

"As for what possessed them, I was curious to discover," Lord Wentworth said. "I find that a lady's spirit has cost His Majesty one of his judges. Croke is an apprehensive man and pliable in proportion. That he should stiffen his neck is

an opposition which no person about the Court had imagined. It is true, he bore an anxious countenance from the day the trial was resolved on ; but so did many another man. It was remarked on the first day of the last week of the pleadings that he had assumed a sudden cheerfulness and strength. Some said it was because his task was nearly over, and the reward at hand ; but the real occasion was that his lady had taken his conscience into her charge."

"How could she do that ?" Helen asked. "Who but a Popish priest can take charge of consciences ?"

"My Lady Croke has that power, it appears," Lord Wentworth replied. "She besought her husband to dismiss all solicitude for her and her children in giving judgment. She was willing to suffer want and disgrace with him rather than that he should mispronounce the law."

"Surely she is a noble lady !" Henrietta exclaimed.

"Surely," said Helen, "this was a freeing, and not a binding of the conscience."

Lord Wentworth smiled, and said it interested him to see how faithful women were in defending their sex. Sir Oliver was of opinion that a whipping all round would do them much good :—all but his little Henrietta. She was too loyal to need a whipping ; and, if he had his will, her father should have it instead of her. Lord Wentworth laughed ; and Sir Oliver asked whether it was true that he had counselled His Majesty to punish those Buckinghamshire gentry like mutinous school-boys.

Being obliged to answer, Lord Wentworth said, in his blindest way, that it was not precisely so. He had dropped the jesting remark that he wished Mr. Hampden and his imitators were well whipped into their right senses ; and this foolish jest had got wind. But he approved all due application of reason first, as was shown by the pains he had taken to keep the judges whom he knew to the straight line. Nothing could be done with Denham, who was of a disputatious and trouble-

some temper ; but from Sutton better things might have been hoped.

"What is his ground?" Helen asked.

"So wide a ground," the Lord Deputy answered, "that I spent more time and ink upon him than upon many an ordinance in Ireland. I announced to him that in a time of public danger, a levy of money must be made. No man disputes that. But further, the King alone is judge of the necessity, and of the fit method of supplying it. Ordinary persons can see but the surface of events ; whereas the Ruler of the State has the deepest insight of any man, and may use his pleasure in revealing or concealing his special occasions : and, for any subject to presume to set himself up as a judge of such matters, so far above his duty, is contrary to the reverence and gratitude with which so gracious a sovereign is to be regarded. This was my argument."

"Your Lordship might have added," said Sir Oliver, "that it is very gracious of His Majesty to relieve us all of care and trouble in such affairs. For my part, I had rather pay all I have, down to this tankard, than undergo the trouble of hearing all that perverse men say, and having to decide between this and that. If His Majesty will take care of the State, and leave us to our sport, and our own affairs, I, for one, shall thank him from the bottom of my soul."

"But, uncle," said Helen, "if you give the King all, down to your tankard, you will have neither affairs nor sport to occupy and amuse you. Is not this what Judge Sutton says?"

"He says," replied the Lord Deputy, "that it is one thing to offer His Majesty one's substance, in a spirit of love and duty, and another to have one's substance levied, so that no room is left for grace on the one hand, nor for gratitude on the other. A low, trafficking method of speech, to my apprehension."

"It is my father's method," Henrietta observed, with a

flushing cheek. "And he adds that if the law is set aside in levying the taxes, no man can call anything his own."

"And no man ought to call anything his own," Sir Oliver broke in, "till he is first assured that His Majesty has no need of it. For my part, it would be my pleasure and delight to give all my fortune to His Majesty, if I had not spent it long ago. Here is my Lord Deputy, with his six thousand pounds a year: do you suppose the King would have to ask twice for it?"

The Lord Deputy smiled, and observed that the King was not so unreasonable as to impose on any servant the labour of governing Ireland, and then taking from him the reward of his toil.

When the young cousins had withdrawn, Helen observed that it was well for those who were about the King's person to speak so, knowing that they had only to ask for gifts to receive whatever they desired: but to make one of them rich, a hundred meaner men were stripped of the rewards of their toil. Men were asking what was the use of law in these days: and they would ask it more fiercely now when three honest judges were contemptuously treated as disloyal for declaring the law which they were engaged to administer.

While they were discussing these high subjects, the Lord Deputy was inquiring of his host whether it was due to Lady Carlisle that Henrietta was loyal, though a Hampden, and was hearing how the pale and anxious countenance that she showed was due to that loyalty which had caused her to break off her marriage with a Puritan coxcomb, and take refuge with her uncle. The consequence was that the Lord Deputy treated her with a tenderness that evening which made it a memorable day to Henrietta, and which inspired her prayer that night with thankfulness that the King was permitted, amidst his troubles, to repose on the friendship of the most high-minded of his subjects. Helen, meantime, was praying that the protection of the law might be speedily restored to the unhappy

people of England, and that the souls of their champions might be strengthened till the oppression of tyrants and the treachery of their instruments should be overpast.

In the morning, Sir Oliver had a serious word to say to his young kinswomen. The Lord Deputy had left his kind commands for them. His presence in these parts was nowhere known: he was on his way to a secret destination; and in truth, he would have appointed Sir Oliver to meet him elsewhere if he had not been informed that no guests were just now at Diggin House. He entreated the damsels to forget him, and to regard his visit as if it had never been.

They willingly promised to speak no word of it, and Helen immediately burned a long letter she had written before breakfast. But as for forgetting the Lord Deputy, that was more than either could promise. In due time it appeared that he had not forgotten them.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ROYALTY IN RETREAT IN MERRY ENGLAND.

THE months passed on, and nobody of any rank found the times improve. The Court came to know what actual want was. The King and Queen were in debt on all hands, and their devices to pay their adherents daily increased the distresses of their people. The only persons who had any wealth which they dared use, were a class who paid in dishonour, and in suffering from the hatred of society for their pecuniary profit. These were the holders and the agents of monopolies, and the collectors of the king's taxes, of which ship-money remained the chief. After Mr. Hampden's sentence was pronounced, and he had to pay not only the twenty shillings in dispute, but costs to the extent of £2,000, under an interdict to appeal to any other court, the Government manifested its triumph by carrying on the levy with extreme violence. The King must have money for the inevitable war with his Scotch subjects ; and he made it the test of loyalty to provide him with funds. There was scarcely an article of the commonest need and use which was not made the property of monopolists ; so that the citizens found it more and more difficult to live, from the dearness of everything which they ate or drank, wore or used. Trade was almost stopped ; for few had wherewith to buy ; and there were few commodities which were worth buying. The very money disappeared ; and, instead of gold and silver, there were brass counters in men's purses ; but this was going a step too far, as the King's advisers were soon compelled

to inform him. It was hard to part with precious coin actually flowing in ; but either it or his cause must go ; and the brass money remained only as a topic for seditious speakers. To compensate for the disappointment of the gold and silver, the merchants of the kingdom were preyed upon. When they would not or could not pay the large sums demanded from them, they were cast into prison, where they lay without trial till they died or paid exorbitantly for release. There was not the less business in the law-courts ; for the King discovered in the trials of his subjects a source of revenue more lucrative than any other. The judges being his humble friends, they were well disposed to serve him ; and the fines they imposed in almost every case that was brought before them, afforded a larger revenue than any tax that could be devised. Country gentlemen must pay high for leave to build a new house : merchants must pay high for leave to unlade their ships : in every shop there were purveyors examining and taxing the stock and sales : in every market there were clerks levying dues upon the stalls, and upon everything sold at them : and then there were guards and soldiers to be paid for protecting these collectors from the vengeance of the people. There was little use in the proclamation which forbade all mention of a parliament, for the nation had now no other hope.

As everything at length hung on this question of a parliament, so it was with so small a matter as Henrietta's remaining at Biggin, or returning home. Mr. Hampden was seldom at home for more than a few hours. At one time he was in Scotland for several weeks ; and none of his family, unless it was Lady Carewe, heard more of him than that he was in health, and tenderly mindful of his children. He wrote to them often ; but he wrote of their interests and feelings, and not at all of his own business. For many weeks he was journeying all over England, in company sometimes with Mr. Pym, and sometimes with Lord Say, or other friends of the law and the people. There had been plans, more than once, for Henri-

ctta to go to the Knightleys. Margaret and her husband had urged it ; and Henrietta was willing : but some obstacle always arose. The country was, in truth, unsafe for travellers : and once, when a sufficient escort was provided by her brother Philip, her uncle discovered that a conference of Roundheads was to be held at Fawsley ; and Sir Oliver made it a test of Henrietta's duty and love to the King and himself, that she should not leave him for such company. Let Margaret come to Biggin instead. But Margaret had now an infant whom she could neither leave nor bring so far on a road so disorderly ; and the sisters had to be satisfied with correspondence. Going to Hampden was yet more impracticable. Lady Carewe was always there ; and, though she and Henrietta could have met in all freedom and affection, she must not be deprived of Harry's frequent visits. Biggin House became Henrietta's natural home while the disturbance of the kingdom continued ; and she was seldom without the companionship of Helen, or one of Helen's sisters. Once also, her own sisters, Alice and Lucy, were brought under good escort, and remained for a month. The result of the visit and of some interviews with the Mashams at their home, and with Aunt Cromwell at Ely, was a strange disturbance of mind to Henrietta. The King and Court were spoken of in a way which irritated and shocked her, and when she remonstrated, she was told such stories of the time as made her ask whether she was out of her wits, or whether her relations were. Aunt Cromwell had been happy to return to her native Ely, where she could at once renew the associations of her youth, and be the proud mother of the Lord of the Fens ; and her satisfactions made her very communicative, while they happily enabled her to dispense with answer or comment. As her boast was true, that everybody of Oliver's kin was safe in these eastern parts, she had no difficulty in summoning Henrietta at short intervals, now that Oliver passed the greater part of his time from home : and she spent hours together in describing what the Fens were like



fifty years ago, and repeating everything that Queen Elizabeth and King James had said when entertained by the family in their progresses. The contrast between the complacency of her tone in regard to those sovereigns, and the sharp and bitter contempt with which she spoke of the reigning King, perplexed Henrietta. What to believe and think she did not know : and when she would consult Sir Oliver, she obtained no satisfaction. He said that everything she heard against the King and Court was, of course, a pack of lies ; and that if she was what he thought her, she would never allow such things to pass her lips, or to vex her mind.

When the King had at length, in the extremity of embarrassment, called a parliament, it seemed the order of the day for everybody to rejoice ; and Sir Oliver tried to do his part by protesting that all the mischief was over now, and that he hoped the people were sensible of His Majesty's condescension : but Henrietta heard some very deep sighs as the old gentleman sat thinking ; and he swore so fearfully at the noise of the bell-ringing and shouting which came on the wind, on the day of the assembling of parliament, and he was so inexorable about keeping the drawbridge up that day, that no member of his household should escape to join in any rejoicings, that she could not but have misgivings about this sudden reconciliation between the Crown and the people. In a day or two, it was clear that he did not choose to know anything that passed in the House of Commons. He advised her to read and believe nothing of the speeches made by her father and his friends. The diurnal writers were poor devils of poets and the like, who would sit up all night and write anything for half-a-crown : they wrote to please their patrons : and not one thing in twenty that they said was true. Within three weeks, however, Sir Oliver believed, without reservation, the news of the day, as sent abroad by these very writers. The story ran that the King had dissolved the parliament, finding that the Commons were bent upon discussing their own grievances,

instead of replenishing his purse. Sir Oliver swore his gayest oaths, flung his wig up to the ceiling, caught Henrietta in his arms, and shouted victory ! When it occurred to him that it might not be altogether exhilarating to her that her father, and nearly all her relations were baffled in the great work and interest of their lives, he kissed her tenderly, told her it was nothing more than a proper lesson which would make them wiser, and foretold that they would be quiet now that they had had their wish of a parliament, and had found that it would not do.

Henrietta's best hope was that she should be enlightened by Helen, who was expected after the next Sabbath : but on the Sunday night her uncle abruptly informed her that he had been obliged to defer Helen's visit for a short time,—perhaps a week, perhaps longer. Henrietta should decide that point. As she looked up at him in surprise, he shuffled in his chair, half laughed, half whistled, whispered in her ear that he wanted her to go a little journey with him,—not very far, nor for very long ; and then burst out into one of his loud songs, to stop all inquiries. In sending her to her chamber, very early, he advised her to be stirring betimes, and to see that her maid packed up her very best dresses and ornaments. They might not be wanted ; but it was as well to be provided. They were to start after breakfast ; and Henrietta's maid was, on no account, to go with her. No matter what the inconvenience might be : not a word must be said about the maid going.

Henrietta might be excused for wondering, while her hair was brushed that night, whose wits were astray now.

Early as she was up in the morning, she was aware that the old gentleman was stirring before her. She heard his loud voice, and his tread, upstairs and down. He was never careless of his dress, as some old gentlemen become after long living alone. He considered a good style of dress to be an important external distinction between loyalist gentry and their Puritan neighbours ; and therefore he was always to be

found in handsome trim, except when returning from sport in the marshes. But this morning there were some additional touches which showed that his mind had been employed on the details of his appearance. He seized upon Henrietta, on her entering the breakfast-room, turned her round with his finger and thumb, and viewed everything she wore with a critical eye. It was strange,—this anxiety about her being well dressed, while yet she was forbidden to take her maid. Again, it was strange that provisions and wine were put into the coach, if the journey was not to be a long one. It showed that it was to be a posting journey. For an instant it flashed before Henrietta's mind that some scheme for conveying her home was in her uncle's brain ; but second thoughts showed that this could not be. There had been time enough, however, for her face to be crimsoned, and then to grow pale, as the image of Harry awaiting her at the gate of Hampden flitted across her mind. Sir Oliver observed it, put his arm round her, bade her fear nothing, and moreover whispered that he would tell her whatever she wished to know, as soon as they were safe off, and could talk comfortably in the coach. He was as good as his word.

"What would'st thou give, little one," said he, as soon as they were on the road, "to pay thy duty to a certain namesake of thine?"

"The Queen!" cried Henrietta, starting from her seat.

"Aye, the Queen! But see, child, you must keep your seat. In such roads as these . . ."

"I will, sir. I will sit quite still if you will tell me where we are going. Where is the Queen?"

"Where we shall be before midnight, if our post-horses are as good as my messenger engages that they shall be. He has been travelling all night to secure our horses in the King's name. Do you know a place called 'Loyalty,' Henrietta?"

"Is not Basing House in Hampshire called so?"

"It is; and to Basing House we are going. We are bring

ing loyalty to 'Loyalty,' as the King's Secretary is pleased to observe in this letter. Hum ! no. I will not show you this letter ; but here is one within it which concerns you. The truth is, the King has privately summoned a few friends of his, of the eastern and southern counties, to meet and confer with him ; and Basing House is the rendezvous. I conceive that the Court are apprehensive of disaffection in the eastern district, where our family is widespread, and in a manner powerful, and that I am on that account honoured with this summons. It is a sign of the privacy observed by the King that the business is managed through a lady of the Bedchamber. Here is the lady's letter."

Lady Carlisle's first inquiry was whether her little friend Henrietta had forgotten her. If she was remembered at all, it was probably as the lady who had taught her little friend to honour the King, and admire Sir Thomas Wentworth, as the Lord Deputy then was. Two such friends ought to meet again ; and it was the writer's particular request to Sir Oliver that he would bring Henrietta, when he came to Basing. If it were necessary to enforce her wish by something stronger, she was empowered to do so ; but an authoritative command would not be required by an old squire of dames so devoted as Sir Oliver had ever been to his admiring Lady Carlisle. A postscript suggested that it would be prudent to bring no Abigail to such a rendezvous ; and Henrietta might therefore depend on due service being provided.

The hours till night were not too many for the alternate reveries and consultations of the travellers. That Sir Oliver should be trusted to any extent was no wonder, but that any bearing the name of Hampden should be admitted to the royal presence . . . . But perhaps it would be to Lady Carlisle's presence only. It was not certain, Henrietta observed, that the invitation meant more. Sir Oliver's way of patting her cheek, and his fond smile, showed Henrietta that he expected nothing short of the highest honour of all.

Sir Oliver was right. The dusk of the May night was still tinged with a glow from the west when the coach drew up before the great flight of steps at Basing House ; and it was late enough for Henrietta to suppose that she would be left to herself till the morning : but she was followed into her chamber by Lady Carlisle's maid, who informed her that her ladyship would expect her to supper in her own dressing-room in half-an-hour, unless she should be too fatigued with her journey. The invitation was of course accepted.

Nothing could exceed the kindness of her reception, or the interest of every word that fell from her entertainer. It was so during the meal ; but much more so when it and the servants were dismissed. Lady Carlisle said she knew whom she was speaking to, and how securely she might converse . . . Ah ! her little friend looked surprised ; but there was nothing very surprising in this.

" I am not so rash," Lady Carlisle continued, " as to take you into confidence at once because you were a pretty and clever child when we last met. It is because I have heard of you since,—heard such things said of you by so exalted a person,—that I regard you with as much trust and affection as if we had been elder and younger sister all the time."

This seemed to Henrietta, amidst her keen delight at such a welcome, somewhat extravagant, till a few words more made all clear.

" You had not forgotten me, my dear child ? "

Henrietta's laugh pronounced the notion absurd.

" Well, then, you cannot have forgotten the Lord Deputy, whom you have seen more recently. I was sure he must have impressed himself deeply on your mind. Indeed, no one who has once seen him can ever find the impression of his countenance grow dim : and no one who has heard him discourse fails to feel the thrill of his voice at intervals for ever after."

Henrietta said to herself that the openness of this admira-

tion showed how harmless it was. Lord Carlisle had been quite right in his lifetime to make himself easy, and let gossips talk. Many a happy friendship must be given up if an opinion was asked of low or foolish people who could not understand such a thing as an honest and self-forgetting enthusiasm. Lady Carlisle went on :

"And he is far from forgetting you, my dear. I have never seen him so interested on so short an acquaintance. I think," and here she looked smilingly in Henrietta's face, "you must be happier now than you were then."

"I am very happy at this moment," Henrietta fervently declared.

"Thank you, my love! I take that pleasant assurance to myself. But I was thinking of a deeper cause. The Lord Deputy spoke of a somewhat pale and wan cheek, and eyes that told of too many tears. Nay, my love, you must not think hardly of him for speaking thus to me. He knew what was then the weight on your heart; and he was quite won by the loyalty . . ."

"But, Lady Carlisle," interrupted Henrietta, "it was not loyalty that made me do it: it was not about loyalty, or the contrary, that we parted. Indeed, I cannot allow you to think so."

"There peeps out your Puritan training, my child. I doubt not there is some nice distinction in your mind, as well as a most religious dread of praise. But it is enough that you and your lover would have been married long ago if he had been as loyal to the King as you."

Henrietta could not deny this; and she was silent.

"Such sacrifices move great minds deeply," Lady Carlisle continued, "and the Lord Deputy spoke with strong feeling about you. May I tell him that— Yes, surely I may, now that your eyes are bright again, and your face all health and beauty,—may I tell him that you have found your reward, and are at peace?"

"I do not desire or deserve reward," sighed Henrietta. "I brought my punishment on myself; and I cannot make a merit of it."

"Little saint!" cried Lady Carlisle, embracing her. "You will make us all take heed to the honesty of our speech. May I then tell him in all honesty that you have outlived your grief?"

Henrietta was silent; and, when further pressed, said "No." Her faint tone and the paleness of her face bore witness to the sincerity and the difficulty with which she had replied.


Lady Carlisle was shocked. She said she should never be able to bear the remembrance of her cruelty. Nothing had been further from her thoughts than that an attachment which had ended so could be still too strong for her little heroine's peace. But the heroic are always placable; and perhaps Henrietta would forgive her.

Nothing was easier, Henrietta said; and she truly felt it. But the conversation did not flow quite so freely afterwards, till a knock at the door of the ante-chamber startled Lady Carlisle out of a reverie which she was pursuing with her eyes on the dancing flame of a small wood fire.

"I must attend Her Majesty," she said. "I must be gone. Amuse yourself here," and she threw towards Henrietta some books, and two or three of the diurnal sheets which were becoming common. "Amuse yourself here, if you like to wait my return. But I may be detained an hour; and you can go to rest when you will. This little bell will bring the woman who is to attend upon you." And the Lady of the Bedchamber was gone.

She soon reappeared,—all smiles. Her Majesty desired to make Henrietta's acquaintance, and would receive her now, if she was not too much fatigued, and if she would disregard Her Majesty's undress.

Nothing could be easier as a first passage of intercourse with Royalty. Henrietta's dread had been that she should faint









The Queen was reading one of the newspapers of the day, while an attendant combed out her long hair.

when the moment came for seeing the faces, and hearing the voices, which she had dreamed of, sleeping and waking, for as many years as she could remember. The apprehension crossed her mind now ; but it was gone in a moment. It was no depression, but exaltation that the summons created. She cast a glance into the mirror, and then at Lady Carlisle, who replied to what was in her mind.

"No matter ! For once dress is not important. Her Majesty knows that you have travelled all day : and Her Majesty is expecting us."

The Queen was reading one of the newsletters of the day while an attendant combed out her long hair. As she shook back the curls on Lady Carlisle's approach, her black eyes shone in the candle-light, so as to satisfy Henrietta so far in regard to her beauty.

The Queen held out her hand to be kissed, and then, instead of withdrawing it, took Henrietta's hand in hers, and made her change her kneeling for a sitting posture on her footstool.

"There ! sit there !" she said. "And tell me,—is it true that you are my namesake ?"

"I have the honour to bear the same name with your Majesty."

"But you are not named after me ? No, you are not quite so young. But we are both Henrietta. And your other name ?" she said, smiling down upon Henrietta ; "are you of that in like manner proud ?"

"My other name is Hampden," said Henrietta quietly : "a name of which all who bear it are apt to be proud."

"And with good right," said the Queen. "Is not the family a very old one ?" she asked of Lady Carlisle.

"A Baldwin de Hampden is in Domesday Boke, Madam, as the owner of the very estate in Buckinghamshire which Mr. John Hampden inhabits at this day. Is it not so, my dear ?"

"And," the Queen interposed, "for which he refuses to pay the charges due to the King." She smiled as Henrietta hung her head, and continued :

"This is no dishonour to the old name, though it may be the mistake of one bearer of that name. I can assure you that the King believes he has no more honourable subject than Mr. Hampden ; and I have heard him say that he would rather have so honest a gentleman in his government than enlisting less worthy persons against it."

Henrietta said what she felt ; that she could imagine no event so happy as that her father should be in the King's political service ;—in such office as should imply their so far thinking alike as that they could act to a common end.

The bells of the French clock in the corner of the apartment here rang out their midnight chime ; and Henrietta was dismissed to her rest, with an injunction to take her fill of sleep. The ladies would spend the next morning in retirement, as there would be an assemblage of gentlemen who must not be disturbed. Henrietta might sleep till noon if she pleased.

"She speaks like a king's daughter," the Queen observed, half laughingly, to Lady Carlisle, after the door closed behind Henrietta. "I suppose the children of these portentous malcontents always believe their fathers created to tread upon true kings."

Lady Carlisle said, apologetically, that Mr. Hampden's influence in the country, since the trial, had really been enough to turn his children's heads. They would learn, sooner or later, what such popularity was worth in comparison with genuine and hereditary loyalty. This child hardly needed such instruction, she believed ; for she had a heart and mind as true and devoted as if she had been born and bred in a Court.

"Indeed !" the Queen exclaimed. "Who would have thought it ! We must encourage the damsel, and see—"

Here the Queen fell into musing. After the hair was done, and the attendant dismissed, Lady Carlisle remained for ten

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minutes leaning on the back of the Queen's chair, and conversing in low tones. She had been disappointed in her notion of marrying a Hampden to some loyal young gentleman connected with the Court. The child's affections were not free. The months that had passed had not cured the attachment to her Roundhead lover.

"Perhaps it may be better so," the Queen quietly remarked. "My Lady Carlisle, you are half asleep. Is it not true that a person who stands between two parties—You clasp your hands. You comprehend? Inquire for me, then, of your own rare judgment, whether it may not be an easier thing to induce a young maiden of enthusiasm to wed the man she loves, than to extinguish her love, in order to marry some gentleman unknown. If she may be equally a mediator in either case, which plan is likely to be the easiest of accomplishment?"

Lady Carlisle was in raptures at the condescension of Her Majesty's genius, which did not disdain the interests of a young daughter of a country gentleman: but the Queen's air of condescension vanished as she coldly declared that the King's interests equalised all classes and all qualifications in her eyes.

This was, Lady Carlisle said, precisely what she meant to express: but when she felt strongly she was apt to offend where she most desired to commend her duty.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A DAY AT COURT IN MERRY ENGLAND.

THE next day was steeped in bliss to Henrietta, though it had its agitations. Some hours of the morning were spent in strolling along the avenue and about the park with Lady Carlisle, and in sitting in the shade in the flower garden. That none of the gentlemen would be abroad, Henrietta knew; but she was surprised that Lady Carlisle was so entirely at liberty. It came out in the course of conversation, however, that this trip to Hampshire afforded a good opportunity for the Queen to hold her council also; and the Romish agents who had been collecting money in her name, through the priests' influence with their flocks, were appointed to meet Her Majesty at Basing House, to report of their success in raising funds for paying the expenses of the recent march of troops against the Scotch, and for sustaining the war, if the stiff-necked Covenanters should try the patience of the King too far. There were two informal councils sitting all the morning in different apartments, and the Queen's ladies were not wanted.

"Did you find it a very fearful thing to converse with the Queen?" Lady Carlisle asked, as she and Henrietta sat in the transparent shadow of a beech, hardly yet in full leaf. "Nobody is near. Tell me how you felt last night."

"The presence of a sovereign is like no other presence," Henrietta replied. "The awe is to me, and I suppose to others, a new feeling; but it is not a fear which renders one dumb and dazed."

"I saw that it did not deprive you of your faculties; and that is probably the reason why Her Majesty was more pleased with you than I have often seen her with a young maiden so untrained in courtly ways. Did you not tremble lest she should judge you less favourably?"

"O no! I was in pain lest my thought of her should prove to have been too high and too endearing. This was my fear, because I have heard much evil of her which I have withstood, as well as much good which I have fully believed."

"You were so occupied with your own opinion of her, that you forgot to be careful of her opinion of you. Was it so?" the Countess inquired, smiling.

"Just so," Henrietta replied seriously. "How can it matter what might be the passing impression of a Queen about a girl whom she would forget the next day? But to me it matters much to be assured, that there is nothing mistaken in the utmost reverence and love for those whom God has placed over us."

"You are a strange girl!" said the Countess. "Does it make no difference to you whether Her Majesty speaks of you with disgust or with favour?"

"Oh, yes! It would be painful to have given her pain, and very pleasant to have her favour."

"You have it, my dear. Did you discover how pleased she was with you?"

Henrietta had not understood the matter precisely so. She had an impression, from certain tones and half smiles, that—Here she hesitated.

"I knew you would find that out, my child; and that was why I pressed you with questions. Her Majesty had supposed that you had been reared in Puritan prejudice, though not actual undutifulness; and this gave that hardness to her voice last night which her enemies are so fond of describing. But she presently learned to know you better; and you will hear those tones no more. How would you like to be in the

Queen's service?" the lady suddenly asked, after a moment's pause.

"It could not be," Henrietta declared. "No child of my father's could live at Court."

"Did you observe what the Queen said of His Majesty's wish to have your father in his government?"

"I did; and my father shall hear of it. But if that were possible, it would be for the sake of my father's reputation in the kingdom, and as representing the people in the government. It would be a different thing for a girl to be in the Queen's personal service."

"But if you could render political service together with the personal—"

"I could not do it. If you would know why, it is because my temper is not patient."

The Countess laughed, and said her dear child was candid. Did she think the Queen's temper impatient, too, so that quarrels would grow up?

Without expressly answering this, Henrietta explained that there were things done by the authority, and it was said by the orders, of the Crown and the Church, which she owned she could not endure to think of. She could live nowhere where she must rejoice, as the courtiers had done openly, at the punishment of Mr. Prynne and Mr. Bastwick, and—

"Oh! those things are horrid!" Lady Carlisle declared. "They make one's blood run cold,—those punishments. But nobody asks one whether one approves of such things. I am sure nobody has ever asked me. Yes, your eyes are asking me now. All I have to say is, that the Lord Deputy considers the utmost severity necessary in these times; and he is always right, you know."

Henrietta was silent. Lady Carlisle then questioned her closely and eagerly about the opinion entertained of the Lord Deputy by her father and his friends; and so great was the eagerness that Henrietta was glad to have heard no word from

any one of them about the Lord Deputy, since he went to Ireland.

"I am afraid of Mr. Pym," Lady Carlisle declared. "I once knew and esteemed Mr. Pym; and I had hoped better things of him than that he would judge so princely a man as his old friend Wentworth so hardly as he does."

"They parted asunder about the loan, I have heard," said Henrietta. "When friends do part, do they not become bitter enemies?"

"Ordinary men may; but it should not be so with men like these. If the princely one is strongwilled and stern, as he has a prerogative to be, the popular one is (or I supposed him to be) so genial, and so wise, that I cannot understand why it is that he hunts the Lord Deputy through all his Irish measures, seeking for means to condemn him. The Lord Deputy scorns all enemies, and ridicules me for my alarm as to what they may do. He believes, as so many of the King's friends do, that Mr. Pym is like a man possessed of a devil,—full of rage and murderous thoughts, and desiring only to outrage the throne and destroy the kingdom. How far is this true? What has the Lord Deputy to fear from Mr. Pym, think you?"

"I can only judge by what I have seen and heard. I do not believe that Mr. Pym bears malice against any person. I believe that he would be as loyal to the King as any man, if certain evils were frankly set right. He is more likely than my father to be in the King's service, I should judge."

"And the Lord Deputy?"

"How can he have anything to fear if he rules by the law? No man can touch him while he sides with the law. If he governs in the way which he admits to be illegal and wilful—"

"Say 'thorough,'—that is his word."

"In the way which he calls 'thorough,' and which other men call illegal, he must surely expect what cannot but follow."



"And what is that?"

"That, as he promised, his own right arm should keep his own head."

Lady Carlisle shuddered, and observed what a fearful destiny it was for a man to be superior to his day and generation. And then she was silent for some time.

"Let us walk further," she said, at length; and she led the way to a seat formed in a bank of primroses and blue hyacinths, where, if anywhere, a young girl's heart would open on a sunny spring day.

"I am going to be very free with you, my child," said Lady Carlisle: "and if I go too far you must stop me. I was not in earnest about your living at Court."

"I thought so; and I am glad of it," Henrietta replied.

"I mean only that, loyal as you are, you will never agree in all that the most loyal people must say and do in such times as these. Your proper place is in a home of your own."

Henrietta murmured that that could never be.

"That is where I think you are wrong," her friend observed. "I think you not only mistaken, but seriously to blame. Ah! it seems hard to say so when you have crushed your own happiness. Well, well! I will not say all I think; for I cannot bear to see your distress. I will only remind you that there is another who suffers—"

"Do you think I need reminding?" Henrietta forced herself to say. "It was for his sake. . . Oh, you do not know what it is for those who love so—so entirely, to think so differently about the thing which they must be always thinking and speaking about, and taking some course about. It is terrible to part, but—"

"But do you mean, my child, that you, sensible and religious as you are,—you, loving this lover of yours with such a heart as yours, cannot keep your temper where you and he differ? Is this possible?"

"If it were a matter of doctrine and belief," said Henrietta,

"we should have taken each our own part long ago, and have lived together in silence on that one point. But now, if the King is assailed, in war, or in a rude Parliament, and if Harry is among the assailants, what could his wife be to him if she felt as I do?"

"She might be the best of wives to him: she might be the most helpful to the King's interests of all the women in England: she would hold the position of a heroine, and would earn the blessing pronounced on the peacemakers."

"Do you really think so?" Henrietta murmured.

"I do: and I believe every real friend you have would say the same. Tell me, have you not been told these things before?"

"Oh yes; but everybody was on Harry's side; and I knew better than they did why Harry could not be happy with me. They would not believe me—(but I am sure he did in his heart)—that I should make him miserable."

"But I who am on the other side think you wrong,—wrong to yourself,—wrong to Harry,—wrong to those to whom you owe loyalty."

"Do you indeed?"

"See what opportunities for service you are throwing away! Think for a moment what you might have done by a wife and a daughter's influence! Henrietta! this is a shrinking from duty which I should not have expected from one so piously and dutifully reared, so—What did you say, my love?"

"I am very unworthy, I know," said the poor girl, struggling with her tears.

"Then rouse yourself to recover the path of duty, to redeem the time," exclaimed Lady Carlisle, imagining that she was speaking in Puritan sympathy. "Consider whether your religion, and your loyalty, and your love, cannot together guard your temper, and—Oh! I wish I could set before you what a course of duty offers itself to you!"

"It is too late now!" said Henrietta, in a tone which was meant to be calm.

"It may not be too late. If it should prove otherwise, promise me—Well, well ! Be tranquil, my dear. How should I act in the matter ? you ask—I who never saw this Harry of yours, and have not met his mother for many years. When I say it may not be too late, I speak from what I perceive in you. The inference is fair, is it not ?"

Though disturbed in spirits, and weeping many tears, Henrietta was happier at this moment than for years past. She and her friend became very confidential. Lady Carlisle told her of the cruel straits their Majesties were in for want of money. She told of the despair of the Court on this head, because the King, they believed, never would have another Parliament ; and there was now no other way. Lady Carlisle and she were not so sure that there would never be another Parliament. The King was certainly out of spirits ; and if all were known, it might come out that he rather repented of having routed the Parliament at the end of three weeks. Those who talked freely of their Majesties could little imagine the trials they had to undergo. In their position there were daily vexations, from friends as well as enemies. Not a week ago a real trial had overtaken the King and Court. They had lost poor Archy ; and he was more missed than many a man of more dignity. Who was Archy ? Did not everybody know who Archy was ? He was the King's jester. In times like these the King's jester was really important,—really a blessing in withdrawing their Majesties' minds from their troubles, and in diverting the Court while so many quarrels were arising. But it was the Archbishop's pleasure that Archy should be punished for some words he had dropped, when in his cups, against his Grace. The poor fellow was in prison ; and his master was certainly very dull without him : but it was his gracious way to yield in such cases.

Before the ladies reached the house they had exchanged promises of confidential correspondence. While Henrietta was with Sir Oliver, she would have nothing to report, because

there was really nothing that she could do for the cause. She was lost there, her friend considered. But, if the time should come when she would be in the midst of people who ought to be glad to know the King better, she should have the means of instructing them. Lady Carlisle would keep her informed of the Royal views and aims, and the injuries they sustained ; and Henrietta, on her part, would indicate in the freest way what His Majesty ought to do, or not to do, according to the Puritan view, and point out any particular danger which she might believe His Majesty exposed to. Thus would these friends consecrate their friendship to their King's service. As she kissed Henrietta at the door of her chamber, Lady Carlisle said into her ear—

“Rest for an hour on that sofa, as I shall do on mine. And while you are resting, think what you might do now, if you were Harry's wife.”

Henrietta's old uncle admired her extremely that evening,—occupied as he was with his devotion to their Majesties : and, for her part, Henrietta scarcely knew her old uncle. He was always a gentleman, amidst all his oddities ; but he was a different sort of gentleman at Basing from anything she had seen at Biggin House, even when the Lord Deputy was there. Sir Oliver was this evening not only perfectly well dressed and well mannered, but elevated in his whole style of thought and sentiment. Henrietta felt that her father was dignified in one way ; and the King in another ; and now she perceived that there was yet another style of dignity, of which Sir Oliver was an example. She could only speculate, when she saw their Majesties distinguishing the old man, what they would have thought if they had seen him tossing up his wig because the King had dissolved the Parliament before it could well get to work. On his part, Sir Oliver's heart warmed to his darling when he saw how pretty she looked, with her heightened colour and her shining eyes. When His Majesty inquired into their relationship, and spoke some kind words about her, Sir

Oliver frankly said that she had never looked so pretty before, and that it was her loyalty that showed itself in that way.

A little later, when Henrietta was in conversation with one of the Queen's ladies, she was startled by the King's speaking to her. He sat down, and made her sit also ; and in the conversation which ensued she became as simply and sincerely interested as if she had been listening to any other gentleman, in any other apartment. His Majesty inquired about Mr. Hampden's health, and expressed admiration of his devotedness to what he had considered to be the interests of the country. It was deplorable, he said, that dissensions should arise as they had done ; but no opposition of views on public affairs had ever blinded him to the honourable character of Mr. Hampden ; so that, when it became necessary to try a certain point in a court of law, he had himself suggested that Mr. Hampden's case should be the one tried, as that of the most choice antagonist whom he could select. How glad would Henrietta have been to recall one single instance in which her father had regarded the King as honourable, or had spoken of him with respect like this for his personal character, apart from his function ! As she could not, she concluded that the King had the advantage in point of liberality and generosity.

His Majesty went on to say that there had been times when he had conceived some hope of a union of forces between the leaders of the opposing views. He had, in fact, consulted some of his friends about the possibility of inducing Mr. Hampden and Mr. Pym, and some of their friends, to aid him in the work of government ; and he did not, after all, give up the hope.

On such a point Henrietta could only listen ; but the manner of her listening showed the King what her feelings were towards her father, and probably induced him to say some things that would not have been uttered for her own sake. He pro-





She was startled by the King's speaking to her.

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bably hoped that every word would go to her father when he said, with a sigh, that no man is always wise, and that every man whose business lies in public affairs has occasion at times to regret mistakes : and his immediate reference to some future discussion and arrangement left Henrietta no doubt whatever that the King regretted the haste of his act of the last week, at the very moment when the members of the dispersed Parliament were stirring up indignation against the King in every corner of the country.

She was astonished afterwards at the sudden boldness with which her tongue was unloosed to say what she now did. Thus far she had scarcely spoken : her devout attention and her beaming eyes had been better than speech : but now she earnestly informed the King of her father's constant assumption that the King must have whatever he needed or desired in the way of supplies ; that all that every citizen possessed ought to be at his service as the supreme head of the nation ; and that all that was to be insisted on, on the part of the people, was that the supplies should be furnished in the fixed mode,—through the regular channel of the Parliament.

“Ay, that is it,” the King observed, with a mournful shake of the head. “That is the essential point on which the acknowledged Ruler of the State is permitted no freedom,—no use of his own judgment, for which he is responsible to the King of kings. The Parliament has its own duty, and if it outrages that duty, the sovereign must do his. He can permit no interference with his judgment and conscience as to the way in which he will discharge the office of Ruler and Protector of his own kingdom.”

“I wish—” said Henrietta ; but she stopped abashed.

“What do you wish?” asked the King, gently. “Speak freely. Tell me your wish. I am sure it is nothing unkind.”

“I feared it was presumptuous,” Henrietta replied. “But I do wish my father might be permitted to explain to your Majesty what he thinks,—and not he only,—what the chief



men of the Parliament mean by the part they have taken. If your Majesty could hear from their own lips—”

“And why not?” said the King. “If they have more to say than has been said in the courts and in the House, why do they not say it? I am always to be found. They would not be glad to see me in their Parliament House; but they will always be welcome to my house, if they come as friends, and not as enemies. I fear, however, that we understand one another only too well. If it is otherwise, the time will come of which I spoke, when Mr. Hampden and his friends will assist me with their counsels, and help me to remedy those mischiefs of which they accuse me, while their own perverseness is the true cause. For eleven years they have withstood their sovereign; and what the natural consequence is, let the misery of the country show.”

Henrietta’s eyes were brimming with tears. On inquiry, the King learned what she had seen in Cornwall when the pirates carried off the children. The King sighed, and said he had done what he could to raise the money for ships; and the people would not pay it. Within that very month he had offered to surrender the ship-money, if the Parliament would provide the necessary funds in any way they preferred. Perhaps he ought to have had more patience with them: but they made his duty very hard. After this, Henrietta had no courage to use the opportunity she had once longed for, and relate the spectacles of the journey from Cornwall.

He had said enough: by the Queen’s looks, directed towards him, it seemed that she thought he was saying too much. He rose with a gesture of farewell, and left Henrietta, but not till he saw that the Queen invited her to her side.

The Queen did not detain her long. She intimated that His Majesty was willing to go great lengths to clear up misunderstandings. He had no reserves. “We mean well,” she said; “whatever the presumption and malice of meddlers may say. When the King has established his principle, and

made the Crown respected, the world will learn what we have suffered to preserve the monarchy from insult and degradation. The King will be the first to forgive ; but he can never yield."

Henrietta curtsied deeply, and would have drawn back : but the Queen assumed a lighter air, and smiled as she said, in an arch way, that these were strange times when pretty damsels were obliged to listen to grave politics, instead of the affairs which ought to engage them. Her advice to such young ladies was to dismiss all these tiresome matters, and love and marry as they ought, and leave it to sober statesmen and sour patriots to manage the business of the nation. Did not Lady Carlisle think so ?

Lady Carlisle did, of course, think so ; and she covered Henrietta's retreat very good-naturedly.

Their Majesties' attendants made much of Henrietta after she had been made so much of by their Majesties ; and she was glad when the evening was over. She and Lady Carlisle sat late in their own apartment, pouring out their enthusiasm about the gracious and injured King, and the devoted and spirited Queen, and the blessing of their having so glorious a champion and servant as the Lord Deputy. The last was the theme which made Lady Carlisle insensible to Henrietta's fatigue as well as her own ; and the poor girl was fairly worn out with the excitements of the day before she reached her bed.

She slept at once,—probably because the least interesting topic—the Lord Deputy,—had come last : but throughout her sleep the mournful and beautiful face of the King was before her, and his deep and pathetic voice thrilled her heartstrings. How willingly she would die for these misunderstood and insulted Majesties !

She had said so to Lady Carlisle ; and Lady Carlisle had laughed, and asked whether it would not be better,—more feasible and happier,—to marry than to die in their service ?

## CHAPTER IX.

### A STRANGE WEDDING IN MERRY ENGLAND.

THE return journey the next day passed for the most part in silence. Sir Oliver was probably occupied with the private discussions of the preceding day, which were no doubt of an important and secret character, as he did not say one word about them to Henrietta. He also regarded her with a deference which it had never before entered his head to feel for her. He had never been so proud of any member of his old house as he had been of this girl the evening before, when she seemed to have engaged more of their Majesties' attention than he had ever done, after a long life of loyalty to the crown and its wearers. The sacredness of the royal favour hung about her to-day ; and it was the more impressive from there being no childish elation in her spirits,—no girlish vanity in her looks, nor in what she said. Perhaps, too, Sir Oliver was wearied with the gravity of mind and manners imposed by the occasion ; for he slept through stage after stage, and up to within a short distance of home. Henrietta was thankful for the silence of the day. She went over in her mind, again and again, every word that the King had said, that she might report it faithfully to her father, as she was persuaded was the intention of its having been said to her at all. Then, there was the new view of her own duty which had been opened to her. Not only was it Lady Carlisle's clear opinion that she ought to be Harry's wife after all (and her belief also that it might not be too late), but it was scarcely possible to doubt that the Queen

was interested in the matter, and was far from desiring that she should sacrifice her happiness to her loyalty. It was true,—but how could she explain it to the Queen?—that it was not to her loyalty that she was sacrificing herself, but to Harry: and this brought up all that Lady Carlisle had said about the weakness of character of a woman whose love and duty could not restrain her temper, and enable her to live with people of opinions and feelings on one subject unlike her own. In the mood of exaltation in which she now was, she felt as if she could forbear and endure to any extent, in the character of missionary among the King's enemies. She was confident that the occasion would never arise. She certainly never could recall Harry: to him the whole matter must have long seemed over: and it was perhaps wrong to have dwelt as she had this day done upon a dream of what might have been. She had acted for the best; and if she had been wrong, it could not be helped now. She must forget herself entirely, and watch for other ways of serving the King's cause. Lady Carlisle had engaged her to a close correspondence: this would be a very great support and guidance to her,—besides the pleasure of it. Lady Carlisle knew how thankful she would be to receive any commands. She wondered how soon the first letter would come. She seemed to have an immense deal to write to Lady Carlisle.

Even this May night was dark when the coach drew up outside the moat at Biggin House. The Fen fogs thickened the air, so that when the entrance door was opened, the dark figures on the steps showed large against the light in the hall. There were several figures,—three or four: and when the coach steps were let down, and Sir Oliver was fully awake, he observed that there were some visitors.

"Philip is there; I fear—I hope there is nothing amiss!" said Henrietta, in a trembling voice.

"What brings you here, Mr. Philip Hampden?" Sir Oliver asked, as Philip appeared to hand his sister out.

"I will tell you, sir, in a moment," replied Philip. "Allow me to speak to Henrietta first."

"Surely, surely," said Sir Oliver, perceiving that there was some bad news. He quickly alighted, cast a glance at one or two bowing strangers on the steps, and hastened to open the door of his own private sitting-room for Henrietta and her brother, shutting it after them before he did the honours to anybody else.

"What is it, Philip?" asked Henrietta.

"Sit down, my dear sister, and I will tell you.—Yes, I bring bad news. You will be a dearer sister than ever henceforward, Henrietta."

"Margaret!" she exclaimed. "Have we lost Margaret? O! our poor father!"

"We have not lost her yet: but we must submit to part with her. There is a dead infant, and she is dying. Her father and her husband are with her—"

"And I am to go. O Philip! take me at once."

"That is why I am here. But, Henrietta, hear me further. I have more to say;—no, not more of ill news. God knows this is as much as we can bear. But, Henrietta, my father will never be happy again, unless—"

"And O! how desolate for Richard! Perhaps we ought to think of Richard first: but, Philip, she was the joy of our father's life! How is he? How does he look and speak?"

"He is calm,—quite calm: but he looks as if he could never smile again."

Henrietta covered her face with her hands, and sobs burst their way.

"Now, Henrietta, hear me! You and you alone have power to console him. If he must lose one daughter, may not another be restored? I may have been wrong; but I dared not oppose the leading of God's hand, as it seems to us to be given. Neither dared Harry."

"Harry!" Henrietta exclaimed, at once calmed, and in an awestruck voice.

"Harry is here," Philip said. "If you have ceased to love him,—but we cannot believe that it is so,—he will depart without seeing you. He will bear that one stroke more. But, Henrietta, you may be the greatest blessing to our father! You may make so many happy! Margaret herself,—let us hope to find her—not departed; and you know how she wished it."

Henrietta raised her hand, and her brother stopped.

"It is God's will," she said, solemnly. "Never was there a plainer leading."

Philip was gone, and Harry entered. In a moment both understood that all was again as it had been long ago. Their love had never, in all that dreary time, run low.

"I was afraid," pleaded Henrietta; "and I am afraid still, though this is the last time that I will say it. O, Harry! may you never repent this return to me,—to one so weak, so passionate—"

"We have both been weak and passionate,—too like idle children for so serious a time and so deep a love. We must help each other, and God will perhaps forgive and strengthen us."

"And now I must go to Margaret. O! my Margaret,—my sister!"

"We will go; but hear me once more," pleaded Harry.

He was all powerful with her now. His voice entranced her; his mind filled and overbore her own; he was at once a messenger from Heaven to her, and her own beloved one. She saw everything as he saw it, and admitted all that he prescribed. He told her that his mother answered for Mr. Hampden, that he would approve of there being no delay. If they were to marry at all, they might marry at any hour; for there was nothing to wait for. The waiting had been all too long: and what could so cheer Margaret, what could be such

a parting blessing, as this restoration of Henrietta to her house, and this binding of a new son to the family? As for her father, this was the one only possible consolation.

Henrietta had no resistance to make. Messengers should be sent forward instantly, to provide relays of horses all the way to Fawsley; and thus no time would be lost. Dr. Giles—

Dr. Giles! Was he here?

Yes; as an escort,—the minister who had baptized her was next to her father at such a time, even if he were not permitted to marry her to his young friend Harry. But now Dr. Giles would marry them in the early morning. Helen Masham and her sister Joanna were sent for. Henrietta should be at Fawsley at the first possible moment; and she would be a wife,—bringing a husband to help to comfort the sorrowing family.

There was no resistance. To Henrietta it was all irresistible; for it was manifestly ordered for her. Sir Oliver rejoiced without disguise. Henrietta would be happy, and she would not forget her old uncle. There were persons, too,—persons in comparison with whom old ruined gentlemen were nothing,

who would be pleased to hear the news; and how could he have any objection to a thing which they were pleased to desire? If his kinsman Hampden must lose his eldest daughter, it was a grievous pity; but here was another daughter, the most loyal-hearted damsel in the world, going to be married to the man she loved; and that was not the less a happy thing that other matters were painful and unfortunate. It was true, the young man was a Puritan, but if some good Royalists did not object on that account, others need not: and it was a question how long a youth who was in that kind of mistake would require to come round under a wife who could teach him better than his guardians had done. There could be no doubt that all would end well where such a woman as his pet Henrietta was concerned. Sir Oliver's orders were energetic accordingly. The chapel of the mansion was swept and gar-

nished, and something of a wedding breakfast prepared in the course of the night. A coachful of the Mashams arrived early, bringing flowers, and some bridal adornments for Henrietta.

"You will consider others,—you will consider Harry, and Sir Oliver," said Helen apologetically to Henrietta, as she brought these things into her chamber, soon after sunrise. "We are not forgetting Margaret: but we know what *she* would wish."

Henrietta was passive. She was not stunned, as Helen had for a moment feared. The mood of exaltation endured. She had a mission to fulfil: she must be above selfishness and sorrow: she had hitherto, in fact, suffered from the want of self-respect. Now she found herself called to be a heroine. The word might not have occurred to her; but she had the feeling. She had no confidence that she could endure always; but she would not fail in these first hours of her new life. She nerved herself to part with Margaret, bitterly as the thought of Margaret dying wrung her heart incessantly during the night. She lay down and closed her eyes, though sleep was impossible. She even wrote these few lines to Lady Carlisle after she rose.

"I thank God that we have met. You were a prophet and teacher to me, preparing me for duty and obedience. My uncle will tell you what has happened, and what must happen; and some day I will tell you why it is that with a settled mind, though so suddenly, I shall this morning have become the wife of Harry Carewe. We marry in the midst of mourning, so I write no more. You will approve: pray for us also. To you I for the last time sign myself,

"HENRIETTA HAMPDEN."

Lady Carlisle never told Henrietta what her own remark was on her shaking off that rebel name: and it was not till long afterwards that she told her what the Queen said on hearing the news of her late guest. Her Majesty told the King that that pretty little devotee of a royalist had already married



her Puritan lover. She hoped the poor child would make herself happy ; for it would really be a disagreeable thing to hear that she had lost herself by marrying a malcontent, for the honour of fetching and carrying in the royal service. Queen Henrietta was not altogether a lady, according to the established English notions of ladyhood.

In a high mood of devotedness Henrietta let her attendants dress her. She appeared without traces of tears ; she spoke her vows calmly ; she forgot no member of the household in making her farewells ; and through it all Harry was, with reason, satisfied. She was devoted ; but there was no self-sacrifice. She was obeying Heaven's will ; but it was in no contrariety to her own. Her destiny was taken out of the jurisdiction of her own conscience ; and it was to be what she would have desired, but not have dared to seek.

Margaret was living when the party arrived at Fawsley ; but there was not any more hope on that account. Her husband and father were so grief-stricken that Henrietta felt at the first moment as if uncertain whether it was they who came out to receive her. It was a settled thing in the minds of them all that there was no other such daughter, no other such young wife as Margaret ; and life without her seemed black as night to those who were nearest to her.

"I know that no one can comfort you," said Henrietta, as she stood with her father's arms about her : "but I shall be with you henceforward, to do what I can. If there is any solace,—any help,—any service that Harry and I can render—"

"I can only bless you, my child, for bringing me comfort in an hour like this."

"It is a comfort to you, then,—what we have done?"

"I could not have believed that my heart could be so lightened, my love. It seems to me that after long straying, and losing each other in the thorny thicket, my Henrietta and Harry have been led to meet in a pleasant glade, and that they

follow it, hand in hand, to their own old home, just when eyes and hearts are longing for them. Oh, yes, my girl! this is indeed comfort."

Margaret would have said as much if she could have spoken. But life was flickering in her brain and on her lips. Her countenance showed her satisfaction in seeing Henrietta by her bedside: and she touched the wedding-ring again and again in a way which Henrietta understood. They thought she commended her child to her sister. Her father, certainly. Then she seemed to desire to be alone with Richard; and no one else saw her again living. In two hours Richard was heard to go into his own study; and those who entered Margaret's chamber found her in her last long sleep, as he had laid her down when she had breathed her last breath on his shoulder.

The household remained together till she was laid in the vault of the Knightleys. Then, anxious to be worthy of her who had wrought with them in many a painful duty, they dispersed on their several errands. Philip went home to Hampden, with Henrietta and her husband, and the poor infant given into their charge. Richard, glad to be anywhere but at home, became his father's envoy to those leaders of the parliament party who had long been in league, with Fawsley for their rendezvous. Mr. Hampden feared that he had been absent from London too long,—selfish in his private griefs. The Lord Deputy was now known to have advised at the council-board that the King should help himself at pleasure from his people's substance, as they would do nothing that he desired; and the Lord Deputy must be called to account for this counsel. Some one had given a warrant to Sir William Beecher to search the persons of Lords Brooke and Say, and the Earl of Warwick; and not only had their cabinets and desks been opened and rifled, but the officers had entered their chambers when they were in bed, and had emptied the pockets of their clothes. There was no doubt in men's minds

that this was done by the King's order ; but the point must be ascertained : and Mr. Hampden's presence was necessary to it. There were riots in Southwark and Lambeth,—the people being unrestrainable when they found that no gaol delivery was to be hoped for from the Parliament. If there was to be no Parliament, they would themselves deliver the prisoners who were crowding the gaols, for refusal or inability to pay the ship-money and other charges, or for refusing to attend the popish services exhibited in the churches by the archbishop and his creatures. The White Lion prison in Southwark was thrown open by a rising of the people ; and the vengeance taken by the Royalist lawyers was sure to be so severe that the parliament leaders went to town to check their proceedings, and support any judge who might be faithful to his trust. Judge Reeve was one who deserved their support ; for, when the assizes came on, he refused to try any man concerned in the riot as for a capital offence, considering the disorder of the time. He would have no hand in shedding any man's blood for the doings of the day, he declared ; but he would punish for mischief-making by imprisonment. The two risings yielded only one victim to the gallows ; and the King and his advisers decided among themselves that all obligation to the law was now at an end, and that they must rule by the strong arm. The Lord Deputy went to work afresh in Ireland ; the archbishop called his own creatures together in what he called synods, and ordered them to levy contributions from the clergy at his dictation ; and the King took his own affairs into his own hands, as he said. It had come to be a measuring of forces between him and the leaders of the Parliament ; and the latter had enough to do during that fearful summer. Mr. Hampden and Mr. Pym took a lodging together in London ; and there were the plans laid for checking the career of the King's evil counsellors. There was delivered, by safe hands, the correspondence from all parts of the country which related new grievances, or showed how the preparations for a final


demand of a parliament were going on ; and thence issued forth encouragements to all good citizens, in and out of office, to hold to their duty in the day of the nation's trouble. In the consultations held there, and in all places to which he was summoned, Mr. Hampden was as prepared in judgment, and as ready in feeling, as if he had had no interests beyond those of the public : but those who knew him best were aware that he wept through many an hour when others slept ; and it was the remark of the lightest among his acquaintance, that from the day of his daughter's death he had scarce'y been seen to smile.

## CHAPTER X.

### POLITICAL IDEAS IN MERRY ENGLAND.

FOR some weeks after their return to Buckinghamshire, Harry and his wife lived in a retirement so complete that they might have appeared insensible to the hurry and discomposure of the country. Harry thought it a small price to pay for the satisfaction of his heart, and for a happy home to withdraw himself from public affairs. He could do as much good by staying at home as others by moving about, because he could administer the affairs of the family which others were too busy to attend to. Mr. Hampden had desired the young people to settle themselves, if they so pleased, in his house of Prestwood, within three miles of his own dwelling : and there Harry carried on the farming of both estates, and acted in Mr. Hampden's place towards the tenants.

It was a calm season for the young people, and for Lady Carewe. Every morning Harry went forth, in his yeoman's trim, to look after the crops, or the stock in the pastures, or to meet the tenants on business, leaving Henrietta with the little Dick Knightley for her companion, and with enough of domestic business to occupy her. He returned to dinner full of country news of a small kind ; but of the large news of the kingdom not a word ever passed his lips. Henrietta never inquired : and he never spoke to her on the old sore subject without inquiry. In the summer evenings, they often rode over to Hampden ; or the Hampden coach brought Lady Carewe and the young people. They could not be very



merry, seeing Mr. Hampden so little, and knowing that they should never see Margaret more : but they loved their home, and enjoyed the delights of its hills. Every pass and gully of those hills was familiar to them ; and after long rides, the lawns at home, the seat on the terrace at sunset, the lingering in the flower gardens till the moon was bright, were the sweetest repose !

“ If it could but last ! ”

That was the thought in all their minds. While such events were proceeding as the King’s mock parliament of peers at York, brought to an end by the petitioning of the indignant patriot lords, and of the angry city of London, and of every considerable place in the kingdom, it was unnatural that any intelligent woman, and especially a Hampden, should be in utter ignorance of such portentous facts. Harry could speak with all his neighbours, and utter his opinions everywhere but in his own house. He saw his mother almost every morning in his rounds. He saw Dr. Giles on other days than Sundays, and in other places than the church. The tenants were of the Hampden politics almost to a man ; and thus Harry’s news and his opinions need not burn in his pocket, though he must preserve silence towards his wife. The question was how Henrietta could bear the utter oblivion of public affairs in which she was living.

“ I do not think there is any oblivion in the case,” Lady Carewe observed one day.

“ O aunt ! ” exclaimed Alice, who was now the established eldest daughter at home, “ who is there to tell her anything ? ”

“ I do not know, Alice ; but I am persuaded that she has means of information.”

“ And why not ? ” asked Harry. “ Why should she not hear, in the way she best likes, whatever she desires to know ? ”

“ Quite right, Harry ! ” his mother said. “ It is much to be wished that every one should look our public affairs in the face.”

"But how can Henrietta hear if nobody tells her anything, and she reads no news-letters?" Alice persisted.

"She blames Lady Carlisle for not reciprocating her correspondence openly," said Harry.

"She does, does she?" exclaimed Lady Carewe.

"She shows me all the letters—I mean, she shows me that she is sending letters to Lady Carlisle as often as she wants to send. I carry them to the letter-bag myself."

"You don't see the letters themselves, Harry?"

"By my own desire I do not. Nor do I vex her with the sight of what I say to her father or Richard about the King's behaviour. It would make her unhappy."

"Where does she address her letters to Lady Carlisle?"

"To wherever the Court may be when Lady Carlisle is in waiting, which I believe she usually is."

"How does Henrietta know where the Court is? It is never in the same place many weeks together. How does she follow its movements?"

"That I do not know," was Harry's reply.

It set his mother musing; but if Henrietta had been present, she could not have thrown much light upon the mystery.

It was quite true that, as she told Harry, she wished Lady Carlisle would send her letters without fears and suspicions, as Henrietta sent hers. How the Court lady did transmit her letters Henrietta had no idea whatever; and she did not consult Harry because Lady Carlisle made it a test of her faithfulness that, having liberty to correspond in any manner with whomsoever she would, she should use that liberty as her correspondent understood it. Henrietta saw no need for mystery in sending her own letters; but, after giving due notice that there need be no mystery on the other side either, she could only receive the letters as they came; and they came in all manner of strange ways. Sometimes she found one in her work-basket or her dressing-box; sometimes a packet was lying in her path on the lawn, or in the lane; sometimes it was

in the pocket of her saddle, or in her bible at church. No servant admitted any knowledge of the matter; and she saw no consciousness in any of their faces. As her own letters were sent away by her husband's hand, she did not apprehend any whispered scandal: and she let the matter take its course.

Thus the summer and autumn passed away. When the election of Mr. Hampden was coming on, it was plain that she was aware how the people exulted over that impatience of the King which had rendered a fresh parliament inevitable;—a parliament which would show a bolder spirit, and demand greater concessions than the last. Henrietta observed to her husband that His Majesty himself certainly regretted that impatience, and that therefore she supposed he had committed an error. She naturally desired, too, that her father should be honourably returned to the new House; and she heard with satisfaction the accounts Harry daily brought home of the enthusiasm of the yeomen of the county on behalf of Mr. Hampden. She was present with her family when his election was declared, though she did not conceal her disgust at the levity of the popular tone, and especially at the disloyal violence of Mr. Urrey, their neighbour.

“Nobody regards what Urrey says,” was Harry's reply, when she wished Mr. Urrey would never speak to her, for that she did not know how to hold her patience in replying. “Nobody minds what Urrey says. He is all talk and no work. He may lead a clodpole or two here and there into mischief; but they soon find him out, and let him rail at the fine people of the land as he pleases.”

This was all very well; but Henrietta described Mr. Urrey in her next letter to Court as a fellow whom it would be well to beware of; in return for which she received thanks which might be jest or earnest, but which puzzled her for the moment.

After the parliament met, Henrietta's tranquillity was visibly shaken. The reversal of so many acts of the King's policy in



so few weeks shocked her ; and the questions which sometimes escaped from her anxious heart proved that she feared for the King's safety, as well as his throne : but the first time of her showing herself completely overpowered was when the news of Lord Strafford's attainder was flying through the kingdom,—and far beyond the kingdom, over all Europe and across the Atlantic. Day after day, as the process had continued, Henrietta had been no less cheerful than usual, though the affair was of a nature which could not be passed over in silence. It was discussed in all companies as an event, when it was not argued as a political question. There was a prevalent belief that Lord Strafford could never be brought to punishment ; but that, if he were, all would be lost for the royal cause. As Henrietta was serene, as well as silent, it was supposed by her family that she felt full assurance of his safety. The greater was her grief when she saw what must come to pass.

It was a lovely month of April ; and on one of its brightest days, towards sunset, a groom of Mr. Hampden's came riding at full speed up to the hall door, desiring to see Harry without a moment's delay. Harry was in the fields ; and till he could be fetched, Henrietta questioned the man, who could only tell her that he brought a letter which he was to deliver into Mr. Carewe's own hand, and that Mr. Carewe was expected at Mr. Hampden's lodging in Gray's Inn Lane in the course of the night. Henrietta bestirred herself to pack his portmanteau, and have supper on the table ; and then she waited till he should come forth from his conference with the messenger.

He thanked her for speeding his departure, saying that there was a riot imminent in London. Yes, it was about Lord Strafford. The King had gone to the House of Lords, to declare his opinion . . .

"I am sure Lord Strafford did not send him," Henrietta exclaimed.

"Certainly not: Lord Strafford considers it a step fatal to himself."

"His Majesty will take care of that," Henrietta replied, very severely. "For a time the Earl will have to retire from public business: that much must be yielded to the clamour: but not a hair of his noble head will be touched while the King reigns; and his retirement will repair his health (so wasted in the King's service!) and he will emerge from his disgraces—the great statesman of his time!"

Harry shook his head mournfully, and his wife smiled in his face.

"My love, there is more going forward than you know. The matter has been brought to extremity by the discovery of a plot. The people are up in defence of the parliament—"

"There is always talk of plots," said Henrietta. "Who now believes in them?"

"All believe in this plot; for the King's handwriting is in the hands of the Commons."

"It is a forgery, Harry."

Harry was silent. In a moment his wife sprang from her seat.

"Let me go with you, Harry! I will be ready before you have supped: I will ride fast. You shall arrive not one minute later for my being with you."

"Impossible, my love. It is a scene for men only."

"Lady Carlisle is there. I must learn the truth. Harry, I must go! If you will not wait, I will follow."

"Hear me, Henrietta! This plot has brought the King to extremity. The army was to have marched up from the North, and taken possession of London. There was to have been a camp round the Parliament House, and another at the Tower . . . You have hoped—I see it by your face—that Lord Strafford would have escaped to France—"

"And who has prevented it?" cried Henrietta. "The

King and the Earl have no traitors in their train. Loyal men are loyally served. This is the work of some miserable, double-damned spy of the parliament ! Lord Strafford is safe, however. Mr. Pym may hunt him like a bloodhound ; but he is too noble game to be torn by—”

“ Let us say no more,” said Harry. “ My love, you do not know what you ask about this going to London.”

“ Harry, I must go. I have reasons.”

“ There are reasons why you would repent it within one hour. I grieve to say it ; but the King is disgraced ; the Queen is in terror—”

“ I must go,” Henrietta persisted.

“ Stay till you hear from me, Henrietta. If I find it possible, I will send for you. Till then,—do you hear me ?—you remain here, or with my mother.”

“ You never yet laid your commands upon me, Harry.”

“ Never before : but I do now. Lady Carlisle would tell you that I am right. Yes, ask her. But whether she is to be found—”

Henrietta laughed somewhat scornfully. Loyal and dutiful persons were in no hurry to hide, she said. Where there was most danger, there would the Court be. The King himself, it seemed, had confronted the Lords, in defence of his best and greatest servant.

Harry caressed and comforted his wife, entreated her to send for her sisters, and not to pine. He would write : he would send for her the first possible moment. It would not do. Henrietta was indignant, was unbelieving, was cold, was all but insulting ; and her husband rode away with a heavy heart.

He supposed that it would be many days before his return : but he was at his own door again the next day but one. Not being expected at home, he rode round by Hampden to tell his news there, the story of the army plot, the story of the King’s intrusion upon the Lords,—the story of the mob of

three thousand citizens who demanded Strafford's death, and denounced all who were supposed to favour him ; the story, too, of the royal consternation and its effects. Mr. Hampden said the point of revolution was reached ; and he had summoned Harry to consult with him about rallying the tenantry to the parliament cause, and preparing for defence, if the army should be brought down to overawe the constituencies of the leading members of the House. Harry had Mr. Hampden's commission to act for him in Buckinghamshire, as Richard had enough to do in his own county, and among his father's connections.

"Go home, now, to poor Henrietta," said Lady Carewe. "She looked just now—"

"Have you seen her already? Mother, you are very good to us!"

"I saw her yesterday ; it was Alice who went this morning. Alice says she must have been weeping all night. She would not tell why : and she would not let Alice stay."

"And as I passed the gate in coming away," said Alice, "I saw the most unwelcome of all neighbours going up to the house, across the lawn,—Mr. Urrey."

"She would not see him, of course."

"But she did. That is, he entered the house ; and he did not come away while I was in sight of it."

"He went in to write me the news, no doubt," said Harry. "I shall find a note on my table, containing the tidings I could tell him. He is so vehement that I never ask Henrietta to receive him as a guest. It is strange that he does not resent our neglect. Henrietta would surely have had spirit to refuse to receive him and his news."

This was a mistake. When Harry entered his own house he saw more than surprise in the servants' faces. Henrietta was prostrate on the sofa in the dining-room, sobbing as if her heart would break. Her husband tenderly raised her, and she seemed to find comfort for her trouble in his arms.

"O! love," she sobbed. "I never thought to grieve in this way before you. I am so sorry you have caught me!"

"As if I would not know all your griefs!" cried Harry. "I hope that rude fellow Urey has not been vexing you."

"Mr. Urey!" cried Henrietta, turning scarlet.


"You did not see him, surely," said Harry. "It is being too complaisant to listen to his savage talk; but who but he could have shaken you so?"

"I have seen him," Henrietta confessed, with her face hidden on Harry's shoulder. "And he brought me such dreadful news!"

"About Lord Strafford? He might have left it to me," Harry observed in great vexation.

"But Lady Carlisle tells me, too;" and in a mood of unwonted confidence, Henrietta put the letter into her husband's hand.

It was very short. It told that she, Lady Carlisle, should never be happy again. She could not have conceived such misery. The King found, at the last moment, that he could not save his best friend, the most loyal of servants, the most incomparable minister, the man who was the glory and grace of the whole realm. The Queen herself assured the King that he had no choice. He had yielded everything! The parliament was to continue, however it might behave; and the King would never again intrude upon either House. It was shocking humiliation: but, O! what was that to this fearful sacrifice of the man who had been his main support in the conflict he had sustained with a turbulent people! Wretched as she was, Lady Carlisle said, she would rather be Lord Strafford's friend than the enemies who had hunted him to his death. Sooner than be the cruel, vindictive Pym, or even the generous but over-strict Mr. Hampden, she would be the heart-broken Lucy Carlisle. In a P.S., she said that one consolation remained,—that of worshipping the memory of the King's best friend,



and cherishing eternal contempt and detestation of his persecutors.

"To be sacrificed in this way at last!" Henrietta exclaimed. "I am certain that no doubt of his life at least being safe ever entered his mind. O! I wonder what he said when they told him the news!"

"I can tell you," said Harry. "He said: 'Put not your trust in princes!'"

Henrietta started, and then said she did not believe it. He was too wise and good a man to imagine that the King would let him die, if it was possible to save him.

Harry afterwards repented answering this. The occasion was a weighty one, however; and the natural triumph took the form of warning to one not behind Strafford himself in loyalty. Henrietta was told, but concealed that she knew it, that Strafford had held the King's assurance, on the word of a Prince, that he should not die. Harry further illustrated his warning to his wife not to trust this particular Prince by instance upon instance of breach of the royal word, since the troubles began.

"You make everything worse!" Henrietta complained. "As if it were not enough that the greatest man in the kingdom, the kind-hearted hero who has been so good to me, in the midst of his mighty affairs, and Lady Carlisle's best friend, is—O! I cannot bear it! And you come to me at such a time, and tell me that the King is false, and the Queen a coward, and I a poor forsaken dupe!"

"Forsaken! while I am your husband, Henrietta!"

"And how did you become my husband but by promising to leave me to myself and my friends on these terrible affairs? And now you make me miserable in myself, and would spoil my dearest friendships!"

"How you mistake me!" cried Harry. "But I will not say another word. Events will speak for themselves only too soon. Shall I leave you, or tell you why your father has sent for me?"

"O ! leave me ! Do not come near me till I can bear it better." As he reached the door she raised her head to say, "If I have been unjust, Harry, it was you who made me."

It did not console Harry to find, some hours later, that, while his wife could not bear his presence, she had given orders that if Mr. Urrey should call, anything he might convey should be at once brought up to her dressing-room ; and that, if he wished to speak with her, she would see him in the dining-room. Urrey must be in some mischief, Harry thought, or was making sport of Henrietta's notorious loyalty. He must be watched, and must know that he was watched.

Urrey, however, stood well with the stout men of Buckinghamshire at this time. When Harry went among them, as Mr. Hampden's representative, to confer with them on the defence of the country, in case of the army being turned to an ill use, he found that Urrey had been before him everywhere, using much more exciting language, and proposing stronger measures. He would have thrown great difficulties in the way of Harry's work, if Harry's own frankness, and steady attachment to Mr. Hampden had not been thoroughly understood. Urrey insinuated that the Carewes were but half-hearted in the national cause. The young man's mother was rather too fond of her daughter-in-law, who, to his knowledge, was in constant correspondence with the Court ; and, as for the young man, he did nothing more than follow the lead of the Hampdens and Knightleys, when, as every patriot knew, it was high time that those gentry should be made to move a little faster. This tone did not generally succeed. Two or three hotheaded men were for rebellion at the very moment that the King had given way on the great point of a permanent parliament ; but of the rest, all but the few who wished to sit still and do nothing under any circumstances, fully agreed with Harry—that their duty was to keep watch on public affairs, and be ready to act, either by sustaining their members in parliament, or, if the dreary

need should arise, by preparing to oppose by force any violent use of his prerogative by the King.

"Harry," said his wife when he came home that evening, "when are you going to London again?"

"I do not know, my love. It depends on events there."

"I wish you would let me go with you. There is room for me in my father's lodging."

"O yes; but I dread the agitation for you. Your health is not your own just now; and you can have no idea what London is like at this time."

"I could bear it better there than here. And, to say the truth, Harry, I do not like Mr. Urrey."

"Nor do I."

"He has always been respectful in his words and manner; but I cannot imagine how Lady Carlisle can make a friend of him as she does. I had much rather see her than have letters through anybody's hands; and particularly this gentleman's."

"Why will you not go to Hampden, and rest there with my mother? There you can conduct your correspondence in your own way. Mr. Urrey will not vex you there; and my mother will see that your letters go and come freely, without any desire to know what is in them."

No: Henrietta had set her heart on going to London: and there she was, accordingly, before many days.

It did not conduce to her tranquillity to meet her friend. Lord Strafford was dead, and Lady Carlisle was not broken-hearted. The time was out of joint, and it perplexed Henrietta greatly.

Her father had made an hour of leisure to receive her; and Mr. Pym spent a few minutes with them the first evening. The two friends lodged in the same house, and usually dined together: and Mr. Pym now told Henrietta that Lady Carlisle was so impatient to see her that she would spend with her two or three hours that day.—Yes, why not? Lady Carlisle was an old friend of Mr. Pym's. He was always sure of a



welcome at her abode ; but it was more convenient that she should visit her friends in London than they should visit her, while she was in actual and frequent attendance on the Queen. Lady Carlisle was therefore not a rare visitor in Gray's Inn Lane ; and she was coming that day.

"Father, what does this mean ?" Henrietta asked, when Mr. Hampden and she were alone for a few moments.

"In times like these," he said, "men's minds, and yet more, women's minds are unsettled. Some have hopes that the strife may be accommodated ; and, since the yielding of the King in the matter of the permanence of the parliament, I will not answer for it that patriotic men, as well as loyal women, may not have believed that Lord Strafford was the sacrifice which might be accepted as a peace-offering."

"Is there hope—?" she stopped ; and her father answered her unspoken thought.

"Whatever is, or may be, said of Mr. Pym being covertly on the King's side is untrue. He is, like myself, bound to the cause of parliamentary government. If you had seen his face, and marked the trembling of his hands among his papers at one moment when the great prisoner was at the bar of the house, you would fully comprehend Mr. Pym's mind."

"What moment was that ?"

"It was a moment when Lord Strafford cast a glance that way. When their eyes met, it was not only the searching strength of the man's gaze that moved Mr. Pym. It was that it came from a countenance so wasted and so wistful, and from a friend of past years, who said in that glance, 'Will you slay me, as one unfit to live ?'"

"And what then ?" asked the weeping Henrietta.

"In a moment the weakness passed away from both. The wrong-doer *was* unfit to live in a time like this. The accuser proved, as his duty bade him, that it was so ; and the wrong-doer did not dispute our right to judge him, but bent his mind to his fate. The accuser who has carried through that great

trial may well be trusted, if any man may, with the conduct of the cause of which that great trial was the opening."

Henrietta's heart sank at the thought of a further unrolling of a history so dreary; and Lady Carlisle's conversation, interesting to the last degree, perplexed far more than it reassured her.

"After my letter, my child, you almost wonder that I am alive? You thought I should die of grief?"

"No," said Henrietta, "I expected something better from you. Loyal hearts must not break at such a time, but be strong."

"That is the noble view. My little Puritan always sees the heroic side; and I am sure we all have need of it."

"If the loyal are right," said Henrietta, "God will not give the most strength to the Puritans."

"How true that is!" exclaimed Lady Carlisle. "How events show it! But a few weeks ago, how little could I (and others who are greater than I) have conceived that we could endure the death of such a friend in such a way! that we could resign ourselves to it as a necessary thing, and almost forgive those who did it?"

"Do you mean that the King so takes the death of Lord Strafford?" asked Henrietta, astonished. "I have refused to believe the rumours of the King's—. I shrink from the word; but the people say he deserted his minister."

"Desertion is not the word, my love. I can assure you,—and you knew the nobleness of the man well enough to believe it without question,—Strafford wrote to His Majesty to desire him not to feel bound by his pledge concerning the preservation of his life."

Henrietta was silent.

"I can show you the letter," the Countess said. "If it was for the public good that he should die, he set the King free from all pledges to protect him. No, no! there was no desertion!"

"Besides," the Countess went on, replying to Henrietta's unspoken thought, "the promise was given when we all supposed that such a man's death must be the greatest of calamities,—that his loss as a Minister of the Crown, as a ruler of the people, would be irreparable."

"We have always so imagined," said Henrietta, sighing.

"And how short-sighted we are! how little we know when we are most confident!" sighed the Countess in response. "We all know now that he could never have served the King again, that he must have been removed altogether from public affairs. Does not that make a great difference, my child?"

"But who knows this, and how?"

"Is it possible, my love, that you have not read Mr. Pym's accusations? Have you not heard of the King's avowal to the Lords that Lord Strafford must be for ever excluded from public affairs? Ah! if you had been here then! If you had been with me in the House of Lords when the little Prince of Wales carried in the King's letter, you would have seen how His Majesty and everybody suffered."

"You hoped that letter would prevail," said Henrietta, "or you would not have been there."

"O yes! we all hoped, as long as we could; and it was right to make every effort, you know. The King told us all (and I can testify how true it was) that it had grieved his heart to sign the sentence the day before. He said, as he took the pen, that Strafford was the happier man of the two."

"No doubt of that," sighed Henrietta.

"Well! when the young Prince entered the House with the letter, we all had to rise, of course; and I, though behind a curtain, could scarcely stand. What a moment it was! I cannot say I had much hope when the postscript came to be read,—entreating that if Strafford could not be spared, he might live till the Saturday. It showed that His Majesty had no hope. Do not you see this, my love?"

"Certainly : but why show it so plainly ? It made the letter of no use."

"As the Queen said, my child, the time was past for the King to consult his own feelings. All would be lost if the enemy had not their own way in this case. Every effort had been made ; there was to have been a rescue—"

"I know, I know," Henrietta interrupted.

"You have heard about that plot : then perhaps you have heard what a scene it was in the House when Mr. Pym disclosed the whole story. Mr. Pym is a wonderful man, Henrietta !"

"Perhaps so : but tell me one thing. What made the King first promise Lord Strafford that his life should be safe, and then sign away his life ?"

"Hush—sh—sh ! my dear," whispered the Countess. "You forget whom you are speaking of. You forget the noble release I told you of."

"No. I do not forget either."

"But you forget those sayings of Strafford's which you used to repeat with such admiration ;—that it is vain and foolish and presumptuous to judge of the conduct of the King, because he must understand his affairs so much better than others can, —must know his own reasons, and so on. Do not you remember, my dear ?"

"O yes ; and I see how true it is when it is a case of raising money, and other management of the business of the realm : but when a word of honour passes between gentleman and gentleman—I cannot understand it."

"No, my love : we women cannot judge of gentlemen's feelings and obligations in such serious matters. If you had seen the Prince of Wales—"

"I was thinking of him," said Henrietta. "What a lesson for him !"

"He is very young, my love."

"A boy of eleven knows what a word of honour means. If he does not then, he never will."

"And he is precocious, I must own," said the Countess. "You should see him making love among the maids of honour ! But I cannot laugh yet. Amusing subjects revolt me. Everybody at Court feels this, and I am sure Mr. Pym does no less. It is true, as you say, my love, that God gives strength on both sides, otherwise Mr. Pym could never have gone through his task in such a way ; and we, the friends of the departed, could not have borne such a calamity as we do. You heard how the dear old archbishop was shaken ? I told Mr. Pym, and I thought you might know in that way. Our friend wished to meet the dear archbishop once more ; and the day before his death he begged the Lieutenant of the Tower to permit it. The Lieutenant told him how to proceed to get leave ; but he had too high a spirit to ask any favour of the parliament, though I should certainly have asked Mr. Pym if I had been aware at the moment. So our friend sent a message to the archbishop to beg his prayers, and that he would come to the window that dreadful morning."

"And did he ?"

"He did ; and, do you know, he fainted ! O no, it is no wonder. I am sure it was the most miserable day of my life. They say there was not a smile seen in the whole Court that day. I cannot answer for it, for I shut myself up ; and the Queen was so good as to desire that I might not be disturbed. But they told me afterwards." After a pause, she continued, with a shudder, "I thought I should have lost my wits that day. I could think of nothing but—O my child ! was it not a noble head ? What an eye ! what a smile ! Ah ! I know by that sigh how you sympathise ; and you are aware he thought very kindly of you. You remember ?"

"Do you suppose I can ever forget that ?"

"No : his notice and his friendship were a real honour. Who can express what we have lost ?"

"It is not only our own loss," said Henrietta, "but what will become of the country, with its best men gone, and taken

off in such a way? We have no other such statesman and friend for our King to rest on."

"No man exactly like him, my child, that is true; but the King of kings, as he himself said, does not leave the sovereigns whom he anoints without friends and helpers. If one is taken, another springs up. If a statesman of one kind of genius dies, another appears. Mr. Pym, now, is a wonderful man, you must own."

"Mr. Pym!" exclaimed Henrietta. "Can you compare that fat man, with his stout health, and his appetite, and his merriment, and his good liking for his dinner, and his showy dress, with Lord Strafford?"

"Ah! you are thinking of that dark, pale, wasted face, and the life like an anchoress's, and the proud courtesy, and the politic gravity. How striking it was! But, my dear, the contrast was no greater than between Mr. Pym and those groaning Puritans, that he is supposed to be like. What is there of the sour Gospeller or the insolent malcontent about him?"

"No more than about my father."

"Just so! And as for the statesmanship, is it not possible that a great man may do more by reconciling the King with his people, than by spurring him on to override them? You know there was once an idea that Mr. Hampden might serve the King in the Government. Well! I may tell you now that that could never have happened while Lord Strafford lived. But now the King is free to take his own course, and satisfy his own likings. And Mr. Pym is a wonderful man! No man is like him for knowledge of his time!"

Henrietta sat thinking that these changes had better pass over Strafford's grave than over his living head; and her friend perhaps detected her line of thought, for she altered her strain very quickly.

"You have had your distresses, my child, I am sure. I fear you have made no great way with your husband and his mother."

"I have not tried," Henrietta answered. "Harry is so good to me! I cannot tell you how forbearing he has been. And he has no thought of disloyalty, I am sure."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Lady Carlisle, with amazement.

"As he understands loyalty, he is very loyal, I assure you."

"Is it possible! And so you are satisfied, after such an expenditure of doubt!"

"I did not say that," Henrietta muttered.

Lady Carlisle put her arms round her.

"Tell me," she whispered. "After all your devotedness, are you not happy?"

"Who is happy in these days?" sighed Henrietta. "No, I am not satisfied while everybody around me is deficient in the very instinct which is so strong in me. But we must not speak of this. I chose my lot; and I must not complain of it. But, Lady Carlisle, I am no saint nor martyr."

"And none but a saint or martyr should marry a Puritan and disaffected husband. I understand, my love.—O yes, I do. And now tell me—how will it be about your little one when it comes?—How is it to be about the observances? What do Puritan papas do about such matters?"

"Harry and I hoped that you would be one of the sponsors. Were we too presumptuous?"

"So far from it that I was thinking of something better—something far more worth your wishing.—Yes; I see you apprehend. If it could be done,—how would you like that the Queen—I dare not yet say anything of His Majesty—should stand sponsor for your child?"

Henrietta's clasped hands and crimson face showed her rapture.

"Well: do not depend too much on my idea. I really feel confident of their Majesties' interest in you to that point.—And, then, there is the consideration of their strong desire to propitiate the great leaders in the parliament. Do not you

think it might have a good effect in the country that a grand-child of Mr. Hampden, and a Carewe, should be so honoured by their Majesties?"

Henrietta thought it would be the finest thing in the world for everybody. She did not believe her husband and her father could resist so angelical a piece of goodness in their Majesties who certainly had—"O! so much to forgive!"

Neither husband nor father was in any rapture on the proposal being mentioned. Harry said that he owned he could not understand Lady Carlisle, and that there must be some corroboration of her impression about their Majesties' goodwill before he could give any sort of assent. In any case, he would ask no favour at Court, and he expressly forbade his wife to seek any, directly or indirectly. He and Mr. Hampden agreed, however, that if the honour should be spontaneously offered, it ought to be gracefully accepted. It was not a moment for churlish behaviour when the King had conceded some important matters, and was evidently disposed to come to some understanding with the chiefs of the popular cause.

"They are so chilling!" Henrietta complained to herself. "They never let me enjoy anything without a check! They spoil my pleasure beforehand about the christening of my own baby."

Out of this it came that Harry was told that he had no heart, or none except for public affairs: and that he cared more for his precious dignity than for either wife or child. And before Henrietta had time to repent of her hasty speech, her husband had said that he had foreseen how it would be if he let her come to London. Her court friends knew her weak side, and took advantage of it. He would not allow it: she must, for her own sake and for his honour, go down into the country before she had done any irreparable mischief by her unnatural and unpatriotic friendships.



## CHAPTER XI.

### DOING ROYAL ERRANDS IN MERRY ENGLAND.

"My daughter, Harry is right," said Mr. Hampden to Henrietta. London is no place for you at present. If I were to tell you what our dangers are, you would desire to be gone."

"Whose dangers?"

"In a word, the critical hour of the country has come. The King's friends chide him for having yielded too much; and his enemies know but too well that those concessions are not to be relied on. Hear me, child! The universities teach him that his word is void about church matters while the Archbishop is in the Tower; and he is abundantly ready to apply the same rule to all his promises. The army is entirely unsafe; and lest it should march down upon us, we are taking measures for calling out the trained-bands, to guard the parliament houses. At any moment blood may be shed: some of the best blood in England would have been shed this very week but for our vigilance and our readiness."

"May I know whose?"

"Has not Lady Carlisle told you that Mr. Pym's life is sought?"

"Is it possible? And oh, father, are you safe if Mr. Pym is not?"

"None of us are safe; but no other man is in the like danger, because he is the great accuser of the Court party. But the days are charged with peril as they pass, like so many

thunder clouds. Do you not see it as you take your airings in the parks? Do you not see it in the face of the congregation at church? The very cries in the streets are hoarse or shrill, as coming out of passionate hearts."

"Will there be war then? Is it war that you mean?"

"It depends on the King. By his plan of going to Scotland I believe that he intends war, whether he strikes the first blow, or compels his people to do so. Whatever the event, my daughter, you should be at home to abide it."

"And you, father?"

"I am at the disposal of the council, who will sit in London permanently henceforth. I doubt whether I shall be much at Hampden this summer: but whether in Scotland or here, or travelling in England, I must have the comfort of knowing that my children are in a safe nest."

Henrietta recoiled from the thought of home. Whether Harry were there or absent, she should be miserable. It was after a conversation with Lady Carlisle that she besought leave to visit Sir Oliver. If she might repose herself at Biggin, with little Dick for her amusement, nothing would tranquillise her so much.

Little Dick might not go to Biggin. Richard would certainly not allow any child of his to live in a royalist house, to incur a debt of obligation, and to receive those strong impressions of childhood which have an incalculable effect on the mature character. Henrietta might pay her duty to her old uncle if she would; but she must so far give up the charge of Dick. It was after another evening spent with the Countess that she announced that she would confide Dick to Aunt Carewe, and go down among her relations in the Fens. The Mashams would take care of her. She would pay her duty to Aunt Cromwell at Ely; and, for a few weeks, she might, as she said to herself, find some peace of mind. She trusted that, as always before, separation from Harry would revive her tenderness for him. They were not now happy together.

The dreadful truth could not be hidden from herself. She feared it could no longer be hidden from her father.

Mr. Hampden indeed understood her restlessness. He counselled Harry to indulge every wish of hers which was not utterly unreasonable, as the sole hope of her finding her own way to peace at last. She therefore travelled to Biggin, with her husband for her escort, on one of the brightest days of July.

By the weight of the luggage in the cart which they passed and repassed on the road, it might seem as if Henrietta intended to remain permanently at Biggin. A remark or two had passed upon it at starting; but Henrietta was to be crossed in nothing, and she was left at full liberty. She had been largely supplied with money of late. If Lady Carewe had been in London, such an expenditure must have been accounted for; but Lady Carlisle had been her adviser and companion in making her purchases; and she declared that her young friend had only provided what was due for the child and grandchild of a Hampden and a Carewe.

During the latter stages of the journey, the horses had started more than once, as horses from a distance were apt to do, Harry was assured, in the Fen country, where the fowlers hide themselves in the sedges or behind the banks, to the terror of strange horses. As the travellers were passing a field of ripening wheat, Henrietta was nearly thrown by the shying of her horse, and Harry was angry accordingly, till he had found that no mischief was done. He had seen somebody lurking in the corn, he declared; and he committed Henrietta's rein to one groom, and called the other to follow him. As soon as he had leaped the gate, and ridden a few yards into the corn, several armed men sprang out, and surrounded Harry and his groom, while two or three made their way into the road, and formed a guard round Henrietta. Her husband shouted to her not to be alarmed;—these were friends; and in a moment he was by her side, introducing to her the leader of



She therefore travelled to Biggin, with her husband for her escort.



the party, Major Petherick, whom she perhaps did not recollect, but who had been one of the party at Hampden on the evening of the return from Port Eliot. After a few words of apology from Major Petherick, and an assurance from Henrietta that she had not been at all agitated, the party proceeded, Harry falling behind, in earnest conversation with the officer in command of this strange ambush.

When he rode up alone, Henrietta was full of curiosity as to what this ambush could mean. The answer she obtained was that the country was in a disturbed state everywhere, more and more armed men appearing in all directions every day. The roads which led to well-known royalist houses were watched by the one party, and the appointments of the agents on the parliament side, and the councils of the leaders, were beset by spies.

"I hope, Henrietta," said he, "that you have nothing in those trunks of yours that you cannot claim as your own : because——. Is there anything wrong with your stirrup ? Let me see ;" and Harry threw himself off his horse and went round to his wife's stirrup. "Is it right now ?"

"Quite right ; but because of what, Harry ? Why may I not carry about everything I have in the world ?"

"Everything of your own, by all means, from your spinet to your watering-pot : but only your own. Carry no letters or chattels for anybody. It is not pleasant, to ladies at least, to have their goods turned over by armed men ; but it is really dangerous to be the bearer of other people's despatches."

"I did not know," said Henrietta : "but I know now."

"If I had not been with you," continued Harry, "that party of Petherick's men would probably have stopped the cart, and searched your luggage. Nay, my dear : do not start so. There is no other ambush between this place and Biggin. Petherick assured me that we might ride as securely as in the park at Hampden."

"How came those men to be watching this road?"

"Sir Oliver is believed to be expecting some guests not quite so innocent as ourselves."

"What guests?"

"I know not. If it is true, you will soon see for yourself."

"I do hope they will not be there to-day," said Henrietta.

"So do I. When they enter the house, I must leave it; and I wish to pay my duty to the old gentleman at full leisure and in peace. We owe him much."

Both husband and wife were silent after this. They were thinking of their marriage as they passed into the old avenue, and the thought was not of the happiest.

No guests were there who could trouble Harry's visit. The chaplain, and two gentlemen who had come to fish in the neighbourhood, were all. Helen Masham was coming, and perhaps a sister or two: that, again, was all.

Sir Oliver was older, and he was in graver spirits, and more dignified in manner, than Harry had yet seen him. His bearing reminded Henrietta of the day at Basing House. She did not say so, for she now kept close, as a sacred trust, all her recollections of the King and Queen. She never profaned their names by uttering them to persons who had no feeling or instinct of "the divinity that doth hedge a king." Husband and wife agreed that Sir Oliver was aged, and that age became him. The rural squire was merged in the ancient gentleman.

In the evening it was certain that Sir Oliver had not drunk too much, nor had the chaplain. The sporting gentlemen perhaps had, for they were not present. They had retired to their apartments from the dining-room. Thus, while the chaplain sat in the west window, reading the news-letter of the week by the last light, the other three sat by the little wood-fire talking over some family matters. Sir Oliver said he burned a little billet every evening in the year now. Old bones are chilly; and besides, there was no knowing, in such times, that

one would not be glad to burn the contents of one's pocket or escritoire at any moment.

Henrietta told him that till this day she had supposed the country gentry of the Fen safe from such disturbance ; and she was proceeding to relate the adventure of the morning, when the chaplain put down his news-letter, the butler entered the room, and Harry put on an air of listening. Sir Oliver was dull of hearing ; but when Henrietta started up from his side, and Harry opened a window, he cried out that Helen was about to arrive, no doubt : he had been sure she would come to-night.

The butler and the chaplain held a brief parley ; and then they informed Sir Oliver that a party of armed men had entered the park at several points, and that they were surrounding the house.

" Pull up the drawbridge ! " shouted Sir Oliver.

The servants had tried to do it ; but the structure was very crazy, and some of the strangers had levelled their muskets at the porter and his aids ; and before they could effect anything, several horsemen were on the wrong side of the moat.

" Here they are ! " said the chaplain from his window ; and several figures passed backwards and forwards in the garden, their armour shining in the yellow light from the sky.

" They may be friends," Sir Oliver observed.

" They may be," said the chaplain ; " but there is a puritanic cut about them, to my eyes. If any of you have anything to hide or burn, you may have time, for I expect to see them go down on their knees and pray before they cross a Royalist threshold."

Henrietta turned red and pale. Her uncle comforted her, and her husband bent over her, tenderly assuring her there was nothing to fear. It wounded him deeply that she shook him off, laid her head on Sir Oliver's breast, and drew his arm round her.

" Do not flutter so, my little bird," said the old man.



"Nobody shall ruffle a feather of my little bird while I am on the nest. Heigho ! whom have we here? Cousin Oliver, unless my old eyes deceive me. It is long since we met, but I believe I see my kinsman Oliver."

It was Cousin Oliver ; and very great was the relief to everybody in the room. The chaplain, it is true, looked haughtily on the Puritan, and settled down again to his news-letter in the window ; but the Carewes greeted Oliver in cousinly fashion, and the old uncle was always courteous as a host. He would have been as polite to Jenny Geddes in his own house, as to any lady in the Queen's train. Cousin Oliver, however, was not to be outdone in manners by the old cavalier. He entered, hat in hand, as a sign that he was not going to stay. He bent as low to the old man as he had ever bent to the King. He declined to sit down.

"You will not sit !" exclaimed Sir Oliver. "Then what are the rest of us to do?"

'They were all on their feet at the moment, except the distant chaplain, who now felt himself obliged to rise.

Cousin Oliver desired that no one might be incommoded by his presence : he would but testify his respect for grey hairs.

"Grey hairs ! pshaw !" cried the old man. "That is out of Scripture ; and the Scripture people did not wear wigs, I suppose. Where is the use of keeping your feet on pretence of my grey hairs, when you see I don't wear my hair grey? If you have no better reason, take your seat, and make yourself at home in your kinsman's house."

"I have another reason, Sir Oliver. I am come, if not as an enemy,—and I am an enemy to no man who is not his country's enemy,—yet am I not come altogether as a friend. I am not come of my own will at all. In a work like ours, our own wills are the last to be consulted ; but I am sent on an errand which I am in no way free to refuse."

"Let us hear what it is without more beating about the bush. What does my kinsman want of me?"

"Your poor kinsman wants nothing of the reverend chief of his house. Nevertheless the cause needs—."

"Aha! you are come on parliament business. Your troop of armed men might have shown us that. What! you are come to turn us out of the old house, because Mr. Pym wants it, or my Lord Brook fancies it, or some of your new-fangled colonels think it is time to be garrisoning the Fens? If the Lord of the Fens bids me quit, I suppose I have only to obey. It is the fashion to obey now. His Majesty yields up his prerogative and obeys his subjects; so old Oliver must yield up his old house, and the uncle must obey the nephew. How long will you give us to remove?"

"It pleases Sir Oliver to jest," said the grave nephew. "He has the choice of all England where to live,—under this roof or any other; and no one desires to trouble him. These armed men shall not enter his presence. All that is asked of him is to permit me to stand in his presence till my men have discharged their office."

"What office? If you will not speak out, kinsman, I must learn otherwise what this means. Carewe, oblige me by seeing what those fellows are doing."

Harry declined to interfere, in the present stage of the affair. He trusted Cousin Oliver would explain it fully. Sir Oliver then desired the chaplain to make inquiry. His reverence was evidently not sorry when Cousin Oliver intercepted him on his way to the door, and plainly intimated that he must not leave the room. It were best, he said, for the avoidance of brawls, that the needful work should be done in quietness and without disturbance. That work, he said, was (not to lengthen out speech) to assure certain citizens, who were charged with the guardianship of the law, whether or not any persons were laying up the means of setting aside the law for good and all.

"Cousin Oliver," the old man said, in an amused tone, "you need better acquaintance with your own kith and kin. No one here troubles himself about the law, whether to cant about it or to break it."

"Most true, I doubt not," Oliver replied; "but some persons in England have more guile in them than this household and its head, and it may be that certain articles may be secreted within these walls."

"O ho! that is your errand," cried Sir Oliver. "Well! it is not precisely what an old English gentleman would covet to have his house searched like the cellar of a suborner of thieves; but in these times gentlemen have to bear strange slights and novelties. But, Cousin Oliver, let it be once for all. When you have ransacked the place from the leads to the cellars, I shall expect an apology, and a pledge that the insult shall not be repeated."

Cousin Oliver bowed low. He did not smile when the old man desired that his people should seize and carry away whatever they did find hidden, for it could be nothing but the rats from the moat and the mice in the walls.

Harry was attending to his wife, who was trembling in a corner of the sofa, her face as white as the wall. As he brought her a glass of wine from the sideboard, all eyes were turned upon her.

"She must go to her chamber," Harry said to Cousin Oliver. "You will allow me to attend her there, on my engaging not to leave her side?"

Cousin Oliver was under great concern that this could not be permitted. He gave her air; he gave her wine; he offered to withdraw to the other side of the door (after casting a glance round to satisfy himself that there was no other way of leaving the room); but for the very short time that now remained, the four persons present must remain where they were.

Except that Harry spoke to his wife in whispers as he stood

over her, no one said anything more. Sir Oliver looked out at the gathering twilight; the chaplain was as still as a mouse; and Cousin Oliver paced the long room, from the large window at one end, past the door, and to the tall mantelpiece at the other. His boots creaked irritatingly; he talked to himself, his lips moving continually, and some odd sounds escaping him in his reverie, till Harry could scarcely restrain his laughter. He and Henrietta had often amused themselves with Cousin Oliver's oddities; but Henrietta was not amused now. She tried to laugh; but it would not do. She threw her handkerchief over her face, and trembled behind it.

At length there were sounds in the hall which made the visitor stop in his walk, and then bow low to his uncle, saying that he would return,—for a few moments only,—to pay his duty before departing. Henrietta then became so agitated that, on Oliver's re-appearance, some apology was made about her alarms on account of stories about marauders roving the country.

"I crave no pardon for saying," replied Oliver, "that my kinswoman is the person in all this house who best knows that we are not marauders, and wherefore we have come."

He launched into a discourse on the lightness and deceitfulness of women, and announced that there had been found not only some of the King's plate, but certain jewels of the Queen's, which were to have been conveyed abroad by the two sportsmen who were supposed to be in bed. Their early morning sport was to have been the deportation of these jewels, some of which were national property. Moreover, there were despatches addressed to foreign agents.

"In the pockets of these guests of mine!" exclaimed Sir Oliver. "On the word of a gentleman, I knew nothing of it."

Cousin Oliver needed no assurances on this head.

"But where did you find these despatches?" Harry inquired; "and why should these Jesuits bring them here? I don't understand."

"Faithful men are inapt at dealing with the unfaithful," Cousin Oliver observed sternly. "It was not on these men that the papers were found. They would have been delivered into their hands to-morrow."

"Where then were they?"

"Folded in the garments of a woman."

"Do send him away!" whispered Henrietta. "I will tell you all."

The intruders were gone presently. No one of the party would touch wine or food in the house. Their leader did not offer to pray, as the chaplain had expected. As the tramp of the horses resounded on the drawbridge, bolts, bars and chains clanged ostentatiously; it was a vain show of indignation, which made Cousin Oliver smile grimly. He had caught a great prize; but in the midst of his satisfaction he bestowed some sorrowful thoughts on his hopeful young kinsman, Harry Carewe.

"I ask you this, Henrietta," Harry said to his wife that night in her dressing-room. "And I must have a plain answer. Did you know that those papers were wrapped in your clothes?"

"I did."

"Did you know that they were from the Queen for certain parties abroad? Did you know that you were to transfer them to other hands here?"

"I did: but hear me!"

"Presently. Did you know that those packets contained the crown jewels?"

"I knew that it was some valuable property which their Majesties desired to pledge or sell."

"Now, then, Henrietta, speak. I will hear you. Say what you have to say."

Henrietta began to explain the feelings under which she had undertaken this adventure; but she could not proceed. She said to herself afterwards that it was because there was no sym-

pathy in Harry's countenance,—none in his heart ;—and no sense in his mind of the principles and sensibilities of loyal persons. He told her that her weak excuses had no weight with him ; and she replied that explanations were thrown away upon those who could not understand or feel them. He told her that she had madly forgotten her duty ; and she retorted that she was devoted to a higher duty than he conceived of. He told her that she had betrayed her husband's honour ; and she declared that she despised the low selfishness of common men, who took precious care of their own honour, while trampling under foot the dignity and prerogative of God's vicegerent. Both believed and said that this hour must dispose of their lot ; and both felt that they must part. If so, it must be then and there.

"Once more, Henrietta," said he, showing himself at the door, after he had disappeared. "I give you one more chance. You shall go home with me if you decide aright. You must choose between the King and me,—between his cause and ours."

"Then I choose the King and his cause," Henrietta replied without a moment's delay : and Harry was gone.

Some bolt or bar must have been unfastened that night ; for before the July dawn, Harry was far on his way to London.

By some means Sir Oliver must have known what had happened ; for he stole an anxious glance at Henrietta as she met him in the breakfast-room.

"My brave little one!" he exclaimed as he kissed her glowing cheek, and admired the fire in her eyes. "I am proud of my kinswoman. Cheer up, my love ! When the traitors find how true spirits rally round their Majesties, we shall see plenty of quailing. We must keep up our hearts now, and our day will come. Meantime, their Majesties shall hear what such humble servants as you and I can do. Now we will have our breakfast together. Those fellows are gone ; but I doubt

whether fishing is their game. Unless Helen comes, we shall be alone to-day. I ask no better ; for I am proud of you, Henrietta ; and you know I always was fond of you."

Henrietta gave him a bright smile. While the passion lasted, she believed herself glad of the parting,—glad to have delivered her soul, and taken the consequences.

## CHAPTER XII.

### WINTER STORMS IN MERRY ENGLAND.

WHEN the winter opened, it was with the dreariest weather. The King's friends who had escaped arrests for treason in London by stealing away to the Continent, wrote of having a fearful passage, and of having found the coldest weather in Paris that they had ever known. There was scarcely any water to be had,—so thick was the ice. There was ice everywhere. The ships in the Channel that were returning to England with crews that were counting the days till Christmas, hoping for once to spend their Christmas at home, were overtaken by storms which seemed as if they would never have an end. Bitter blasts succeeded each other like the billows of a raging sea: the sails and rigging were sheeted with ice, and the vessels became unmanageable in proportion as the hurricanes rose higher; so that there was such a scene of wreck all along the south coast as no living man remembered. Few ships arrived safe in port, and many crews were entirely lost. Such mourning was never known as among the seafaring people round our shores. On land the weather seemed to obstruct everything. The navigable rivers were frozen; the roads were blocked with snow in many places; and the excessive cold made travelling difficult and hazardous. The King had to wait for his news from York; the Scotch messengers to the Parliament could not reach their destination. In every county in England the inhabitants were in a state of suspense which threatened to spoil their Christmas. While no regular convey-



ance could pass to or from London, there was that dim vague sense of what was passing there which is one of the mysteries of all societies in which men have ever lived. In all times and countries there has been that unaccountable transmission of tidings on great occasions—rapid, mysterious, and generally accurate—which is described by the proverb of a little bird carrying the matter. In the remotest corners of the kingdom rumours were afloat of disturbances in London,—of danger to the King,—of the overthrow of the Church. Sometimes there were exaggerations ; such as that the Papists had had a successful gunpowder plot at last, and had blown the Parliament skyhigh ; and, again, that the 'prentice boys of London had captured and imprisoned the bishops ; but on the whole there was a truer notion of the state of London than could afterwards be at all accounted for.

There were not many travellers on the roads at such a season ; but a coachful of ladies, well escorted by horsemen, was approaching London from Buckinghamshire as fast as circumstances would admit. Lady Carewe was taking her nieces up to town, to spend the rest of the winter, as there was now no chance of Mr. Hampden being able to return home ; and he was so worn by anxiety,—or his family thought that he must be,—that it was a duty to make a home for him where his duty lay. A house had therefore been engaged for the family in the Strand : and on the 10th of December the Hampden family coach entered London.

It took a longer time to reach their house, after passing Tyburn, than had been required by the same space of road in the most obstructed part of the journey. It had been easier to dig through the snow-drifts than it now was to penetrate the crowds that were collected before every great house, and from the Haymarket onwards, it was said, to St. Paul's. At Charing Cross there was a long detention. A string of coaches from the City was passing, very slowly, down towards Westminster ; and it seemed as if the procession would never end. After

sixty coaches, which contained the Corporation of London, there was a long marching train. The London apprentices, including the city shopmen, walked five abreast, to the number of many thousands, the foremost ranks exhibiting a vast parchment, on which their petition was inscribed. On they tramped, more and more and more of these young men coming into view, till the children asked whether it was possible that even London could have so many apprentices as these. Again and again the march was stopped for awhile, and then resumed, while a tremendous roar of laughter or shout of wrath astonished distant hearers. The Hampden grooms became interested and excited, and they made their way down to Whitehall or further, and brought back news of what was doing. The people were making game of the bishops. One bishop had entered Palace Yard amidst jeers and angry threats ; and several had been prevented from coming out. At length there was such a roar of rage from that direction, and the passions of the crowd were so evidently rising, that Lady Carewe gave orders to the coachman to draw out of the throng in any direction that was possible. The getting into the Strand was a question to be considered afterwards.

The irritable crowd was not disposed to be incommoded by the passage of the great family coach ; and some began to be abusive. A voice shouted that this was a party of the Queen's friends come to count the apprentices ; and Alice looked at her aunt in dismay at the cries and gestures of some of the angry people. In a moment the mood was marvellously changed. Somebody recognized the livery ; and when the news spread that this was Mr. Hampden's coach, the crowd not only parted to let it pass, but hundreds turned to escort it wherever it might be going. When the young people alighted, it was amidst the cheers of a crowd ; and as each of the City processions passed, its members caught up the cheer, so that before it was done, the young people were satisfied that their father was the greatest man in England.

"Is he not so, Aunt Carewe?" asked Nathanael.

"Perhaps you and I, and a good many more people, may think so," she answered: "but there is a much greater number who consider another gentleman,—a friend of your father's,—to be a greater and more important man."

"Cousin Oliver?" asked Lucy. "They call him Lord of the Fens."

"But Aunt Carewe said 'another gentleman,'" observed Nathanael; "and Cousin Oliver is not a gentleman."

"It is Mr. Pym," Alice said. "Dr. Giles told me that he is called King Pym in London."

"Mr. Pym is the most powerful man in this kingdom," Lady Carewe declared; "or perhaps in any country in Europe. But he would not be so powerful, if your father were not so close a friend. It will never be forgotten that, three weeks since, there would have been bloodshed in the House of Parliament, and a failure of the hopes of the nation, but for Mr. Hampden's gentleness and prudence and winning manners."

"About the Grand Remonstrance, you mean?"

"Yes: it requires the most solemn patience of a religious nation to relate such a story of injuries received from the Government as that Remonstrance shows forth; and the telling such a tale of wrongs cannot but be dangerous to the King and his friends. No wonder, therefore, that his partisans in the House were angry, and provoking to the friends of the people. The fury was so great that there would have been fighting, but for the effect of one man's noble temper and religious prudence."

"And that gentleman was my father," said Lucy to herself, very proudly.

Till dark the young people could not be drawn from the windows, even to eat or warm themselves; and several friends who came in by the backway, when there was not room at the front, told them that such a day had never before been seen in London. It seemed as if the whole kingdom was

petitioning Parliament on the same day. It was true, there were processions still going after dark : and the flare of the torches which they carried, and the lights which were hung out from every house along the Strand, shone upon faces which were never to be forgotten. In the processions some were angry and loud, some resolute and silent, and more indifferent. At the windows and along the causeways the spectators were alarmed, or animated, or amused, according to their natures ; but all were under the one solemn impression that such a day would begin a new period in England.

Lady Carewe's brother, Sir Amyas Denton, came in at dusk. He said that the bishops had overthrown the Church that day, to a certainty. One of them went into a passion at being jeered in Palace Yard : and he hurried eleven of his brethren into a foolish revenge. They sent in a protest to their own House, not only against their being hindered in going to their seats, but against any acts of the Parliament being considered valid which should pass during their absence.

"Who was that bishop ?" asked Nathanael.

"Archbishop Williams, I should imagine," Lady Carewe replied.

"Williams, of course," said her brother : "and he will be answerable for whatever may happen before New Year's Day."

"What will happen ?" Alice asked.

"Possibly episcopacy may be overthrown altogether. Possibly it may be saved by the bishops humbling themselves. We may see a dozen of them on their knees at our bar in a day or two, begging pardon for their impertinence."

"A dozen bishops on their knees !" cried Kitty, laughing : "I should like to see that."

"I should not," said Nathanael ; and his aunt and Alice agreed with him. When the thing actually happened within three weeks, they were sorry for those who were obliged to be present to witness such a humiliation of any ministers of religion.

Other visitors told of the fury of the people against Colonel Lunsford, who had done infinite mischief this day. He had rushed among the apprentices in Westminster Hall, sword in hand, and had slashed right and left, wounding several. It was said that one man was killed.

"That one-eyed bully!" exclaimed Philip Hampden, who had just entered. "Why did not one of them close his one eye with all gentleness, and lead him home to the Tower?"

"Is he gone to the Tower? Did the King—?"

"Yes, the King sent him there. Not as a prisoner. Do not suppose that. He is gone as Lieutenant of the Tower."

"Surely that is not possible!" exclaimed Lady Carewe.

"It is too true," Philip declared. "My father confirmed it when I asked him an hour ago. The appointment will be annulled. The country will not endure it."

"But will the King yield?"

"He must."

"He will make no difficulty," Sir Amyas declared. "He has become accustomed to take back his acts: and it now costs him almost as little as to forsake his word."

"Sir Amyas Denton, do you know you are speaking of the King?" cried Nathanael, turning from the window with a kingly air of his own.

"I do, my boy; and sorry I am to remember it. We will not argue the matter now; but do you fix your attention from this night forward on the King's words and acts, and then judge for yourself whether he is to be trusted."

Nathanael said that other people might play the spy upon his Majesty, but he never would. His brother Philip told him that it was now the first duty of every good citizen to do what Sir Amyas Denton had said. It could not be permitted that more royal promises should be broken. Then Nathanael supposed that Colonel Lunsford would remain Lieutenant of the Tower.

"What is the truth about what Colonel Lunsford has done?"

asked a lady who now entered the room, thickly veiled. It was Lady Carlisle.

"Surely, Lady Carlisle, you would be better at Hampton Court?" said Lady Carewe.

"Better anywhere than in London on such a day as this," said Philip.

"Never mind about me: I am safe enough," replied Lady Carlisle; "and if I were not, their Majesties' friends must run some risks in such times. My dears, I am so glad to see you all!" she said to the young people, embracing the girls: "We have much to say to each other; but I must know now, before all things, what is the truth about Colonel Lunsford. What has he actually done?"

The story of the scene in Westminster Hall was told by degrees by one and another witness of parts of it. When Lady Carlisle was gone, it was agreed by all present that she had a right sense of the ruffianism of the man, and that there was therefore a strong probability that Colonel Lunsford would be sent adrift,—a thing which also came true within a few days. Not, however, without the army of apprentices having come armed to the doors of Parliament, challenging Colonel Lunsford to fight them now.

As it grew late the crowds went home. There were still knots of people in the road, voluble and vigorous in gesture: and there was a patrol which was understood to be established for the night: but the torches burned out and were not renewed. The shouts from the river behind ceased. It became too cold for the citizens to remain abroad without strong reason, and Mr. Hampden's house was closed. The young people sat up till late in hope of seeing their father; but at length they gave in, and went to rest;—the more willingly because it was not certain that he would come home at all that night. On some less portentous occasions he had been detained in the House till morning.

It was not so now, however. Lady Carewe and Philip were

talking by the fireside when he entered. He looked jaded and old ; but he declared it was hunger that made him look so ; and he sat down at once to the supper that was on the table.

It was not the time, Lady Carewe saw at once, for the conversation she desired to have with him. She was sorry ; but she saw she must wait. He was so hoarse, and so exhausted after the clamour and the portentous proceedings in the House, that he must have no further fatigue, nor any working upon his feelings.

"Only this, father," said Philip, as all rose at the end of Mr. Hampden's supper. "Lady Carlisle has been here."

"No doubt, Philip. She was at Pym's house all day. It was certain that she would come also to mine."

"Is Mr. Pym sufficiently wary about that lady?" asked Lady Carewe.

"I believe he is. My own opinion is that she is not dangerous. Not dangerous to us."

"She came here," said Philip, "to inquire about some of this day's transactions : and such inquiry cannot tend to danger, and may to safety ; as here she, and the King through her, is likely to learn the truth."

"Had she no other errand?" Mr. Hampden asked of Lady Carewe.

"She spoke of Henrietta. It was natural. She always does."

"What did she say?"

"What our own hearts have said before. She dwelt upon the innocence of Henrietta's intentions,—and upon the poor girl's ignorance of the contents of the despatches."

Mr. Hampden said nothing. It needed no explanation that these excuses had no bearing upon the fact that Mr. Hampden's daughter, the wife of a Puritan patriot, had been engaged in an intrigue of the Queen's.

"Let me ask you one question, brother," said Lady Carewe.

"Are there any circumstances, any conditions, under which you could receive our poor child under your roof again?"

"Do not say 'No,' father!" Philip entreated. "Harry is so unhappy! We are all so unhappy!"

"Is *she* unhappy, Philip?"

"There can be no doubt of it," Lady Carewe declared. "The first fever of her passion is over. Her mere perplexity must be very great; but what is that in comparison with— Brother, I need not tell you that there is nothing in political passion which can fill the void of loneliness after a wedded life."

"Let her stay among the friends whom she has chosen. Such is *my* judgment. Harry will act for himself."

"Do you mean never to see her more?"

"I do not say that."

"If you should enter the Government, father," said Philip: "if you should become Secretary of State, and become a counsellor of the King—"

"That will not come to pass, Philip. The plan is too uncertain: the King's intrigues and misadventures are warnings too strong."

"Mr. Pym thinks so?"

"We think alike on the matter. But it does not follow that Pym may not have charge of the Exchequer some day. As to my poor daughter, when Harry's honour permits her return, her father's tenderness will not be lacking."

"Bless you, brother!" "Thank you, father!" were the answers.

Though he had been standing with his lighted candle in his hand, Mr. Hampden did not go. He observed, after a moment's musing, that he had something to say which would be best said now. Yet his voice wholly failed when he would have proceeded.

"To-morrow, brother," said Lady Carewe. "Rest now, and speak to us to-morrow."



He spoke now, however.

"I did not think," he said, "to have taken any order in regard to my own remaining years. I was content to have lived to the end as I have lived for many years : but I have lost my daughter Margaret, who was a dear friend : I have lost my child Henrietta, who was very dear to me. It has pleased God to make my life very desolate—" He stopped.

"We understand, brother ; do we not, Philip ?"

Philip was silent and very pale.

"I am about to marry again," Mr. Hampden resumed. "I am about to wed a lady at Reading, about whom I will communicate all you wish at another time. Sister, she is worthy of the place once filled by one whom we have mourned so long. Philip can scarcely remember his mother."

"I do," said Philip, in great emotion. "But, father, far be it from me to say—(if you would learn my mind upon this)—that you are not right. You have been sorely tried, and of late—"

"Truly desolate, my son, though I have had such friends as you two."

"You need the solace," said Lady Carewe.

"Yet more, the country needs that we should have stout and cheerful hearts, sister : and God knows, mine has of late been neither." There was a moment's pause, and then he said, "Her name is Letitia Vachell. And now good-night, good sister and good son ?"

When the door closed after him, Lady Carewe asked, "Had you any thought of this, Philip ?"

"None whatever. Is it as new to you, and as—as strange ?"

"It is neither new nor strange to my expectations, Philip. When he did not marry for some years, I believed he would live as he said just now. But see how grave his countenance is, remember whether you have seen him smile since Margaret's death, think how we have lost Henrietta, and then marvel if you can that he inclines to renew the life of his heart."

"I am not wondering, aunt."

"For my part, Philip, I approve it. I remember what my sister's love for him was ; and on her part I say it is a thing to be desired. Is it not so ? "

Philip intimated, in the fewest words, that the times were very grave for new enterprises, involving the domestic happiness of any. He believed that a season was coming during which men's lives would be as clouds before the wind. If, however, his father was to live to wear grey hairs, and to see his great grandchildren, this new marriage would be looked upon as a great blessing.

"Right," said Lady Carewe. "And, Philip, I know you are not thinking of danger to the interests of the eldest son—"

"Aunt Carewe, I never thought of it at all."

"So I perceived. But if you had, I would have assured you that your due expectations will be duly regarded. As it is—"

"Aunt Carewe, where all men's lives are precarious, mine is at risk with the rest. I cannot spend thought on what may be behind the black curtain which the Devil and the King have let down between our eyes and the prospects of England. As my father has lost daughters, he may lose sons."

"It is not like you, Philip, to speak thus."

"True : but I speak,—perhaps not without reason."

"God save us from outliving you, Philip ! "

"Blood was nearly shed to-day," said Philip. "If it is not to-morrow, it will be next week or next month. And how many heads will fall like Strafford's ? Aunt Carewe, the land will be full of widows."

They parted for the night with full hearts. The uppermost thought in both their minds was, how Henrietta's heart would smite her when she heard the news. She would say to herself that she had made Harry a widower, and had caused a young bride to be brought home to Hampden, to fill her mother's long sacred place.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### MAN-HUNTING IN MERRY ENGLAND.

"You are very good to me, Philip," was Henrietta's word when the coach which brought her from Biggin drew up in the Strand.

"I promised my father and Aunt Carewe to bring you to them in cheerfulness and serenity, as far as depended on me," said Philip. "You are not afraid to meet them now?"

"Not much," she replied; but she was trembling. "But how is it that my father forgives me, if Harry cannot?"

"You will soon see whether Harry cannot," Philip replied with a smile. "We all feel that the times are sorely perplexing to those to whom they are not wholly clear: and we who are clear must be gentle with those who are perplexed. Now, Henrietta," he said, as the coach advanced to the door and stopped, "be open and sincere with us. This is all we ask."

Henrietta said she never meant to be otherwise: she would now promise anything that was asked.

"What is all this?" Philip exclaimed, as he stood on the step of the coach. "The house seems to me to be guarded. These must be some of the trained-bands."

The house was guarded, front and back: and Henrietta had to pass through rows of armed men into the hall. At the foot of the stairs there were guards; and on the landing above, where Aunt Carewe folded her in her arms. Henrietta's confinement was so near that it was necessary to spare her from agitation, if possible. But how was it possible in these days of trouble?

These guards were friendly, she was assured. It was well that Henrietta had not arrived the day before when there really was alarm in the house. The King's officers had come to seal up Mr. Hampden's study, and all his papers, and his clothes, and everything that could contain evidences of treason. He and five others had been fixed on as the King's chief enemies; and they had been impeached in the House of Lords: but this was held to be a mere form, as the accusers had broken through all rules in the conduct of the business, and the Parliament was fully resolved to protect its own leaders. The guards now present had been sent to protect the Parliament officers in the act of breaking the seals. An hour ago, the seals were removed, and care would be taken that Mr. Hampden should be safe in his own house.

Safe or not, Mr. Hampden did not come home that night. It was an anxious evening for his family. Philip came in once; and other friends succeeded each other with news. The King's Sergeant-at-arms had been at the House almost all day. He had come by royal command to accuse five members of the Commons of high treason, and to demand their persons. There had been no debate; and no answer was given to the Sergeant-at-arms to report. The time was come when the King must be kept to strict order in his dealings with his subjects, or there would, in a week, be no Parliament at all. The House had promised to send a reply to Whitehall as soon as the conference between the two Houses on the breach of privilege of the preceding day should be over.

It was late at night before the King got his answer. His palace of Whitehall was only one of many houses to which news was brought from one half-hour to another. The diurnal writers were up all night, and the printing presses in the City were issuing sheets of news as fast as they could be worked off; so that the story of the collision between the King and the Parliament had spread far into the country by the morning. All the friends of the families of the accused members were

full of excitement, and far better pleased to administer news than to sit by their own firesides, that bitter January night.

First in importance was the assurance that the accused members would not be delivered up on the King's mere demand; but they must meet any charge that was legally advanced. One friend came in to say that he had just seen how that matter was settled. Mr. Pym and his four fellow-sufferers under the King's displeasure had been addressed by the Speaker. The House was very full. It had been much agitated; but the extremity to which the King had gone had created a great solemnity. Every member looked grave: few conversed with each other; and those who did, spoke in a low tone. In so quiet a House, the Speaker's voice, though neither loud nor steady, was heard by every one. When the five names were spoken, and the respective members rose and faced the chair, the command was laid upon them to attend the House from day to day till the injunction should be withdrawn: which command they received with an obeisance.

Why did not Mr. Hampden come home? his family asked with great anxiety, as the clocks struck nine.

The House was awaiting the return of the four representatives who were carrying its reply to Whitehall.

Then some one came in who had seen the deputation alight at Whitehall, and enter. Two of them, Lord Falkland and Culpeper, were friends of the King, and Privy Councillors; and the other two, Sir Philip Stapleton and Sir John Hotham, could hardly be offensive to his Majesty. What was the message they carried? It was an assurance that the House would give its earliest and gravest attention to his Majesty's message, and that the five members would be ready to meet any legal charge against them. Then, while news was arriving that the streets were full of City soldiery, sent by the City authorities in response to the demand of the Commons of protection, Philip and another went out again, to see the deputa-

tion leave Whitehall, and to ask Sir Philip Stapleton where Mr. Hampden could be found.

For two hours the family waited anxiously for Philip's return. Weary as Henrietta was, she would not go to rest; and no one else could think of it. At length they heard the last news that could reach them that night. The King had at once admitted the messengers; but it did not appear that he had considered what he should say. If he had, he had forgotten it. He took notice of no one of the four but Lord Falkland; asked a question, and did not wait for the answer before giving his own. He would send an answer in the morning to what the Commons had said: and he dismissed the messengers so hastily, that their coach was half-way between Whitehall and Westminster Hall before Philip could overtake it.

What of his father?

Mr. Hampden was in good health and heart. Yes, Philip had seen him. He could not say where he had seen him. A quiet night was needful to all the accused members after so memorable a day, and in face of such a day as the next. Mr. Hampden sent his love to his household, and prayed them to have no uneasiness on his account. He was firm in his innocence; and he was under the pledged protection of the Parliament, because the cause was that of the Parliament. He bade his children good night, and was himself going to rest.

His children went to rest, awestruck at the thought of their father being under public accusation as a traitor, and wondering what could come of such an impeachment of such a man, but in no way doubting of his personal safety. The war which had been so long spoken of in whispers as too probable seemed now very near. It would be fearful; but their father was safe for this night. Little did they imagine how the night was passed by the King's household. Some of his gentlemen went to rouse the lawyers of the Four Inns with commands to form themselves into a guard early in the morning. Some went

into the City to hold consultation with the chief magistrate, and demand the use of the trained-bands in the King's service. The night was so used, that by the time the Houses met at ten o'clock, the streets and roads were swarming with armed men. It seemed scarcely likely that the day would pass over without bloodshed,—so furious were the Royalist guards at the spectacle of the trained-bands marching past Whitehall, instead of stationing themselves there. They were going to protect the Parliament. The King had miscalculated when he supposed, from his late reception in the City, that its forces were on his side.

Philip went out immediately after breakfast, having arranged with Lady Carewe for a service of messages throughout the morning, by means of the grooms.

The first tidings were simply that Mr. Hampden was in the House, looking well, and in his usual quiet spirits. After that, all the rest was astounding.

The King's coach was ordered and brought up in great haste. The King was going to Westminster. The King was attended by an army of guards; and their insolence was so great that it was scarcely possible that the peace should be preserved. The boast among them was that the King was going to put down rebellion with a high hand: he was going to lay his grasp on his enemies in their own House, and pull them out of the very seats from which they had uttered their treasons: he was going to take such order that he should really reign from this day forward, and that turbulent men should trouble the kingdom no more.

Then came the news that the King had gone to Westminster surrounded by his prodigious armed escort, who had filled all the passages of the House, and crowded up to the very door of the Commons chamber, and within it. The King had surprised the House—or intended to surprise it—by his rapid approach and sudden entrance; but the intention must have *got wind*.

Lady Carewe was glad she had prevailed with Henrietta to keep her chamber this morning ; for it was overwhelming, even to her, to hear that the King had himself gone down without notice, to apprehend the accused members. Strong news however is seldom or never concealed. A scream from Henrietta's chamber told that she knew all. She had come out upon the landing, and learned from the servants what had been told below.

It was to little purpose that Philip himself soon assured her that their father was safe. "He had escaped—"

"Escaped !"

"Yes,—escaped from the King's grasp. It was the barest escape ! By some means Mr. Pym was warned of the danger ; and the five members had just withdrawn when His Majesty entered. 'Where are they?' Why, that is what all the world is asking. What is certain is that they passed out by boat just as His Majesty descended from his coach ; and that the City will take no less precious care of those five members of their House than of the choicest treasures of old London."

Philip was, in another moment, gone. He was thirsty as on a midsummer day, and hoarse ; but he was very happy. His honoured father was that day a representative of the national cause ; and his proud son had no serious apprehension of any immediate personal danger. Before returning to the scene of excitement, Philip sent off a messenger to Hampden with the news. It was well that his report of Henrietta was not an hour later in date.

The agitation was too great for her, "O ! if I could see Lady Carlisle for one quarter of an hour !" she sighed, when she knew what was about to happen.

She was indulged. By the river the distance was not great, and the passage was clear ; and Lady Carlisle came during the hour that was her own, after the Queen's passion at the King's misadventure had subsided. Lady Carlisle's heart was too full



for control when she and Henrietta were alone. She answered freely the agonized questions which were put to her.

No doubt Mr. Hampden and Mr. Pym and their comrades had been in great danger of arrest for high treason. 'How had they escaped?'—Mr. Pym had been warned. There had been distinct but ill-explained warnings for some days; but—Well! she would let Henrietta know the truth,—sure that her dear child would make no ill use of it. The Queen had roused His Majesty to this unfortunate attempt by more than entreaties,—by reproaches,—by taunts of cowardice.

"You are not in earnest!" cried Henrietta.

"Can I be otherwise, my love, on such a day as this? I heard the word 'poltroon,' I heard (for she spoke shrilly)—I heard her demand that he, the King, should bring her the traitors with his own hand. Ah! my love! we are all children of passion at times; and if ever I saw faces moved by passion, it has been at Whitehall to-day."

"Did you know what the King was going to do?"

"Not precisely; but I was dreadfully anxious. It was a weary morning. The Queen seemed lost in thought, but restless. She looked at the time-piece every minute: at last she smiled in my face, and told me that by that moment His Majesty and his crown were secure. By the time the hour struck which was then about to strike, Mr. Pym (the rival king she called him) and his abettors would be under arrest for high treason. I thought I should have died: but it was necessary to act: and, Heaven be praised! the delay of the King's coach in the crowd saved him!—saved all the five."

"What was it that you did?"

"I sent him a note by a quick and sure hand."

"To my father?"

"No; to Mr. Pym. I cannot tell you more: and you are not fit to hear it now. My child, let us be thankful they are safe! Yes,—safe. The people of England will never let a hair of Mr. Pym's head be touched."

Henrietta was infinitely perplexed : but all such perplexities must wait. The agitations of the day were consummated by Henrietta's condition. Before night her child was born ; and the child, a boy, was living, and likely to live.

It was no use now wishing, as Lady Carewe did many times, in the course of that night, that the family had remained at their lodging in Gray's Inn Lane, or, better still, at the house at Chelsea, where they had spent some weeks of the autumn, till the troubles brought them into London. Mr. Hampden and she had thought that they could send the young people away into Buckinghamshire, if the public quarrel should ripen into war ; but that Henrietta should be brought to bed in this town lodging had never been imagined. And this very night was the noisiest and most alarming that had yet occurred. Henrietta was in the quietest room in the house ; but the sailors and wherry-men made almost as much clamour on the river as the citizens did in the streets. Everywhere the people were banding themselves together for the defence of the Parliament ; and the assemblages in boats and on the wharves, the nautical cries, the shouts for privilege of Parliament, the cheers for the City bands, when the news spread that the King could not have their services because they were pre-engaged,—these movements broke up the quiet of the night. Then, gunshots were heard occasionally ; and the river flared under the torches which traversed it in all directions.

All this was bad for Henrietta ; but it was a small disturbance in comparison with what was in her mind. She wept so that it was vain to recommend sleep to her.

"Believe me," said Lady Carewe, "we are in no serious fear for your father's present safety. He is doubtless hidden in the City. But, if I err not, it is another thought which afflicts you now, my child."

Henrietta's redoubled sobs showed that this was true ; and Lady Carewe went on :

"In a few short days—possibly in one single day—you and

Harry will be smiling together over the folly of two young persons who did not know when they were blessed enough, and threw their bliss away. In a few hours possibly, Harry and you will be adoring this new little idol of yours. Ah, yes! it is a pity that Harry was not here when his first-born saw the light: but, this retribution over, further lamentation will be wrong."

Harry was coming then! On this consolation Henrietta slept at last.

Harry did not come in one day—nor in two, nor in three. The trouble of the time was answerable for this. No man could be more impatient; and his messengers brought ample evidence of it; but Mr. Hampden's tenantry, and many more of the yeomanry of Buckinghamshire prepared to ride up to London, to the number of four thousand, to protect their member, and to offer their support to the Parliament; and they chose to have Mr. Carewe for their leader. They could not be brought up in complete readiness for any sort of action, in less than a week. Meantime, it required all Philip's judgment, and all his cheerfulness, to keep up the courage of the family. The King's friends gave out at one hour that the accused members had fled to foreign countries whence they could never return, and at the next that His Majesty knew where they were lying hid, and had them as in a trap. Again, everything went wrong with the King. He gained nothing by a visit to the City, the day after the fatal Tuesday when he failed in the object for which he had violated the privilege of Parliament. Wherever he went shouts of "Privilege!" arose: copies of the Protests of the Commons were thrust into his coach: the City bands were not well affected towards him; and his seamen, whom he had supposed as loyal to the Crown as to the sea itself, openly went over to the other side. Finally, after a week, His Majesty had to hear of the return of the five members whom he had called traitors, to their seats. It was easy to go to Hampton Court or elsewhere, out of sound





of the cheering ; but it was useless ; for the news brought of what the people of London, and thousands from the provinces were doing in Westminster, was worse to listen to than the shouts themselves. Lady Carlisle related afterwards how anxiously the King inquired all the particulars of the passage of Mr. Pym and his comrades through the streets, escorted by all London ; and how he caused himself to be informed of every word that could be remembered of Mr. Hampden's speech, which opened the business of the House that day ; and how scandalized the Queen was at the freedom with which a gentleman who was a mere layman spoke of the Old and of the New Testament, and of a new religion which a man might live and die for. The audacity with which this was adventured proved, Her Majesty thought, that these Puritans were given over to Satan : an opinion strengthened by the observation of some of Her Majesty's attendants, who declared that neither Mr. Pym nor Mr. Hampden looked as they were wont. There was a fierceness in their countenances and in their discourse which made their own friends remark that they were now the King's irreconcilable enemies.

With Henrietta, however, Mr. Hampden was not severe. Grave he now was always ; stern a man might well be who had been so often trifled with ; and fierce any Puritan gentleman might be who had seen the word of a King so broken, and the purposes of the highest gentleman in the realm so easily shaken and so deeply depraved by the influence of a woman of strong passions, herself in the hands of a clique of Popish conspirators.

" You see, my daughter," said Mr. Hampden, when he took Harry's seat by Henrietta's couch, " you see what it is to trust persons to whom superstition is more dear than the most indispensable and common virtue. You see what it is to be the messenger and tool of persons to whom power is worth any perfidy. I speak not as one guiltless in this particular. There are but few who have not been beguiled, at one time or

another, into some trust or hope that the enemies of our country were repentant, or were becoming reasonable ; and of those few I am not one. It is not many weeks since it seemed to me possible that this sore quarrel might be appeased, and even turned to a good use by the yielding of the King to God's clear Providence ; and I might then, but for that mode of Providence which we call accident, have become a minister of the King's. Therefore I am far from thinking harshly of some things that you have done through a too confident trust in unworthy claimants of our trust. And as for the spirit,—the temper—”

Henrietta bowed her head, and Harry implored that that misery might never be spoken of again. Mr. Hampden replied :

“Far be it from me to speak severely of any loss of the Christian gentleness and candour and grace which are so easy in quiet days. I have trouble enough with my own spirit to pity others who are under the same temptation. Only this, my children,—this one word for you and for myself,—such passion is unholy : it must never prevail again.”

Both thought it never could. They had suffered too much. Harry added in his own mind that the King and Queen were too far disgraced to serve as idols any more ; and Henrietta settled it with herself that, as her family could never hear any side but their own, and would never be able to enter into the King's reasons and feelings, her part was utter silence on royal affairs. She did not herself understand some recent proceedings, and probably she never should. She would withdraw to the country, read no news-letters, interdict political discourse in her own house, devote herself to her child, and never offend her husband more. She must teach her child to pray for the sovereign and the royal house. Nothing could absolve her from that duty : but it should be done in secret, and so as never to offend Harry.

“How does it go with our father, do you think ?” Harry

asked, when the door had closed upon Mr. Hampden. "How does he look in your eyes, after being hunted for a week as a traitor?"

"Harry," whispered she, "his looks are such that I was glad when he took this child upon his arm. I hoped the gentle feelings which he seems to have lost would come back again. Surely, Harry, they cannot be lost for ever."

"I know not," said Harry. "It is said that where civil war is possible, there mercy dies with the first drop of blood that is drawn."

"Civil war! Is that inevitable? And when and how will blood be drawn? Does Mr. Pym think civil war certain?"

"Not only Mr. Pym, but every sane man thinks so. The first blood does not remain to be shed. Colonel Lunsford cast the die when he drew his sword on the apprentices at Westminster. Yes, it was a low and unworthy beginning; but our trial is that precisely,—the task of contending with the low and unworthy on behalf of what is to every religious citizen noble and precious."

Henrietta sighed; and hour by hour the best delights of her present happy days were mingled with fear and grief at the thought of civil war. Her father's happiness did not now depend on his children as it had done: and, as for the rest, she would not think about it.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### PATRIOT FAREWELLS TO MERRY ENGLAND.


THOSE who would not look forward, and those who did, found themselves ere long involved in the fearful experiences of civil war. For three months from the failure of the King's scheme to seize the Parliament leaders by trespass and violence in their own House, there were attempts at a treaty between the King, who insisted on ruling without a parliament, and the nation, which insisted on its right of parliamentary government. The King wanted those months, and a few more, for preparation ; and he therefore kept up the pretence of negotiation as long as possible. At last it was over. At last the parliament and people were wearied out. At last Lady Carlisle had done all she could to restrain her friends from deadly conflict ; and things must take their course. She could go on seeing the right side of everybody's conduct, and worshipping the ablest man she knew, whether on the one side or the other : she could still perplex passionate and simple-minded people by her practice of helping both parties in turn, or even at once : but she could not, after all, avert civil war. She had notified to certain friends, so that it could not but reach Cousin Oliver's ears, the discouragement which had struck the hearts of the Royal family when the King's standard was overthrown by a storm, the first night of its erection : and wild was the exultation in the prayers of the Puritan camp in consequence. She had placed her services at the Queen's command when Her Majesty stole away with her children

to France ; but the Queen had preferred foreign attendants, unmitigated papists, and thoroughgoing champions of Divine Right, and had given gracious permission to her dear friend the Countess to remain behind. Thus Lady Carlisle was at liberty to devote herself to the care of any suffering friends, and especially of Mr. Pym, whose health and strength were impaired by the prodigious toils and anxieties of recent years. She had saved the country by frustrating the King's (or rather the Queen's) plan of seizing the five members, and using the opportunity for putting down the parliament by force of arms. She hoped she had saved the King by securing him an interval for negotiation with men far less disposed to violence than himself : but the King had not sincerity enough for negotiation with honest men. When it appeared clear to such a mind as Lady Carlisle's that Mr. Pym and his coadjutors were contending for rights which the King could not understand, and did not believe in, it was a settled thing that nothing more was now possible than to keep up each mind to its true temper, and to ensure the fullest play to the greatest ability. Henrietta did not pretend to comprehend this : but she revered a cast of mind so much above her own, as she supposed. She saw that Colonel Urrey (as he now was) kept up his intimate acquaintance with Lady Carlisle and other royalists, while acting in full concert with Mr. Hampden in the war ; and she had no further doubt of the ability of such very enlightened friends to judge of their own course, without being insulted by criticism from such as herself. She prayed to be made as enlightened as they were ; for she was very unhappy. Both of them approved and encouraged her deepest persuasions and strongest emotions in regard to the King ; yet each acted with the Parliament leaders,—the one in council and the other in the field. There was nothing for herself, she felt, but to do nothing.

Therefore she busied herself in affairs which must be innocent. She had charmed back Margaret's child to her house

and her heart. She made Harry believe her the very best of mothers, by the fine promise of her own infant. She adorned Hampden House for the reception of her father's bride, and welcomed the lady with a grace which won something of his old tenderness from her father. When the dreadful blow fell on him which caused the royalist scribes to exhibit him in lampoons as a reprobate from God's favour, a man marked by calamity in retribution for his treason to the King,—when Philip died of fever at the outset of the war, Henrietta was the consoler of the household and the wide-spreading family ; so that Cousin Oliver himself considered that Mr. Hampden's probation was not complete while such an one remained to him of his elder children. A man who had at home the solace of a wife after so many widowed years, and of such a daughter, redeemed from the snare of the fowler, and snatched as a brand from the burning,—a man so specially favoured could not be said to have drunk his fill of the cup of bitterness. Such things could be discussed only in Mr. Hampden's absence ; for he was impatient when any thoughts or words were wasted on such a question as whether this or that person was happy or no. It was no time for caring about pain or pleasure. It was one of those junctures when all that had been done by good men of an elder time for the purification of religion and the security of liberty was at stake. The Bible and Magna Charta were now to be sustained or thrown into a corner and trampled under foot ; and no man in possession of his understanding could decline any sacrifice in their defence, or stop for a single moment in his work to weep over losses of his own, or sigh for blessings that were swept away. No mention of Philip therefore passed Mr. Hampden's lips ; and his joy in a wife worthy of him was shown by the trust he reposed in her as a helper in his work rather than by any change in his manner and discourse.

Such change as might be observed was not in the direction of lightness and cheerfulness. He had many cares, and he



found them very burdensome. He was rarely at home, because he held what was called a joint command with Lord Essex ; and Lord Essex was the most vexatious of partners in any business, from his delays and his fickleness. There were many losses incurred, and many successes missed by lack of ability or of zeal in officers of various ranks ; but the vexation which gnawed Mr. Hampden's heart was his colleague's unfitness or unworthiness.

Meantime the work went on well in Buckinghamshire. Cousin Oliver had raised a body of troops which were the pride of the whole family connexion. Harry was resolved that the Hampden troop should not be far behind the Cromwell Ironsides ; and he had fine material ready to his hand. The sportsmen who knew every hollow of the hills, and were familiar with the passes of the Chiltern range, and could ride as English hunting men only do, were the very stuff out of which to make a trusty force for the service of the Parliament ; and great was the rejoicing when Mr. Hampden returned for a few hours now and then, and his approbation of the soldierly trim of his country neighbours could be obtained. At his own house all hands were busy. The women were laying in stores of food and medicines and clothing, in case of any siege of Hampden House ; and they diligently set themselves to learn as much as women might of the art of defence. Henrietta was meantime at Prestwood, for the most part ; and there she passed her days with the two children, much as if no civil war was raging within a hundred miles, and might roll that way any hour.

The day came when Harry's household must move to a safer place. Mr. Hampden foreboded that Prince Rupert would fall upon such of the Parliament force as was in and about Thame : and when Lord Essex failed to secure those posts by reinforcements, advice came to Harry and Colonel Urrey and other officers to bring their troops together to join Colonel Hampden on his descent from the short cut across the


hills. Harry and all his neighbours but one obeyed. That one was Colonel Urrey ; and he had other work to do.

It was a busy day at Hampden House. The ladies were finishing the embroidering of the Hampden motto on the colonel's standard. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum* : such was the text which illustrated the life of their father, as the daughters said while plying their needles in haste. They had given out the knots of riband which distinguished the Hampden green men. They had provided a new orange scarf for their father to wear over his armour, as an officer of the Parliament. The one he had worn hitherto was soiled and stained ; and now, when he rode forth from his own gate, all should be bright upon him. And so it should be with Harry. Hitherto every service had been appointed to him but actual fighting. If he was now on the verge of his first battle, he should go forth in gay trim. Dusty day marchings and damp night watching had dimmed his lustre ; but now he should be as trim as any cavalier in the King's army.

They little knew how near the event was. There came a message that Gunter's force was hard pressed and needed reinforcement, at Chalgrove Field. Colonel Hampden was gone there, having put himself at the head of Sheffield's horse, and picked up some of Gunter's dragoons, wherewith to harass Prince Rupert on the right of his position, and get round to the aid of the Parliament force, till Essex should bring up the main body of troops. Harry was to despatch as many horse as he could spare, with due regard to the safety of Hampden House, where he was to stay in command of a sufficient guard.

Harry did not stay. Colonel Hampden never wore the scarf ; but his standard went to the fight on Chalgrove Field.

Henrietta had not known nor conceived what it would be to send men forth to fight against their King. If she had imagined what passion it was that she had been smothering within her for so many months, and how the dread of battle



and the horror of blood would work upon her, she would rather have hidden herself and the children in any chalk-pit of the hills than have been at Hampden House that day.

Her husband had but a moment. He asked her to pray for her father and her husband, first that they might do their duty, and next that they might come home to those who loved them best.

No,—she could not so pray. She could not mock Heaven by such a prayer when her husband was going forth on the most undutiful errand in the world. She could not pray for the success of crime against an anointed King.

“You will not pray against us, Henrietta?”

“Will I not? Day and night I pray for the King; and shall I not now?”

Harry was bursting away, when she called after him:

“I pray for you too, Harry. I pray that you may be spared the punishment of your crime,—of your— I will not say what.”

“Henrietta,” he said, approaching her again, “I believe you despise me.”

“I do, most heartily, in your hours of waywardness, which you are so proud of.”

“I believe you hate me, Henrietta.”

“I hate your treason. Lift your hand against your King, and I shall abhor you. Save him,—turn the battle if it goes against him, and I will forgive you everything.”

“Is this your dismissal of your husband to his duty as an Englishman?”

“I have heard enough talk of public duty. I should like to see something of the thing.”

“Is this the way you strengthen your husband’s heart now the hour has come?”

“Make what you can of it. Go!”

He was gone. She saw his face as he rushed past the window. Her heart was in her mouth at the sight, and she

flung her child on the floor, and burst from the room and from the house, crying upon Harry to come back—to come back for one moment. Whether he heard the cry was never known. None others who heard it ever forgot it. Harry deputed another to his post of guard at Hampden, and galloped to Chalgrove Field.

The first news thence was that Colonel Hampden was coming. Next, that he was coming because he had received some slight hurt. No one in the house believed this. He would not come away from a battle-field, or from the merest skirmish, for a slight hurt. The nearest surgeons had been sent for before he alighted. His head drooped, he had clung to his horse with one hand, the other arm being disabled; and he was in great pain. He said he believed he should live, and the surgeons said the mischief was not of a fatal nature; but, as the household all acknowledged afterwards, they never had any hope. His frame had long been so worn, and his spirit so jarred, that his vital forces were low.

Henrietta was missed from his bedside. No one knew where she was, till little Dick Knightley said that uncle Carewe and she had been angry, and he had run away, and aunt too. She came back and took up the baby, and Dick believed she had carried baby away.

She came back. Someone who knew her had met her on the road hastening towards Chalgrove, and had turned her back, and taken her into his own house. She would not have been safe at Prestwood, and there was no persuading her to set foot within the Hampden gates again. She had accused herself of murdering her husband; and this might be in a manner true. Mr. Carewe had been even less like himself than Mr. Hampden in the fight. Both fought like desperate men, and Mr. Carewe especially seemed to thrust himself in the way of danger. His horse stumbled in the growing corn: he did not shelter himself by the hedgerows as he might have done: he pushed his horse wherever the enemy were thickest. The

enemy helped him to his death only too willingly. Colonel Urrey showed himself openly on the King's side to-day, and he seemed to glory in it. "That is Colonel Hampden," he had shouted to the prince's officers, "that is Mr. Carewe," "that is Luke," "that is Gunter," and few of those whom he pointed out but fell or were wounded. Mr. Carewe was among the dead.

During the week that Colonel Hampden lived there was much for everybody to suffer, and but little consolation of any kind. There was no triumph in the case, nothing creditable or hopeful in the conflict of the day, and nothing that was encouraging in prospect. Four hundred troopers had engaged Prince Rupert's far larger numbers, in expectation of the Lord General coming up in force ; but he never came. Colonel Hampden's assumption of the command of Sheffield's troop was needless, and his rush into the fight was precipitate. It was a mistake to come down from the heights to attack the King's force in the cornfields, where they had taken up their own ground. There was rank treason abroad that day, and Colonel Urrey had slain, as if by his own hands, the neighbours, and acquaintance, and comrades of many years, whose confidence he had no doubt sought in the King's service. The whole business was humiliating, the affliction almost intolerable : and the noisy triumph of the royalists made itself heard even in the innermost chambers of Hampden House.

The dying man there was not one to be troubled by vexations so low. To him it was a small thing to be judged of man's judgment, and his soul was not moved by misgivings such as were haunting more than one mind about him. He endured sore pain of body ; and he concealed neither that nor the anguish of his mind. His country's fate was dark to his eyes. If Mr. Pym died,—as was but too probable,—who was to guide affairs, and how was the valour of the people to be led ? He was too religious a man to doubt that the kingdom would be cared for by the Ruler of the world ; and he was too



upright and generous a gentleman to doubt now of his own part in what had been done for the preservation of the liberties of England, or to repent of any sacrifice made in the cause. He was clear that if the people and their parliament had not withstood the King, worse miseries would have overtaken the nation. Yet, while neither doubting, repenting, nor distrusting, he mourned with a bitter grief. "Confound and level in the dust, O Lord!" he prayed, "those who would rob the people of their liberty and lawful prerogative. Save my bleeding country! Have these realms in thy special keeping!"

The same words were uttered in prayer, with the change of one word, on the King's side. So it is in all civil wars.

Not all the sweet and solemn strains that she was afterwards wont to hear overpowered in Henrietta's heart the echoes which came to her ear from her father's grave;—the muffled drums, the volley fired over his coffin, and the rise and fall of the psalm sung by the troop as they marched back from the churchyard—

Why go we mourning,—mourning,—mourning,  
Because of the oppression of the enemy?

## CHAPTER XV.

### ROYALIST FAREWELLS TO MERRY ENGLAND.

THAT sweet and solemn music which Henrietta heard daily for the rest of her life was in France. When Uncle Oliver had passed from dotage to death, when the King lay in his bloody grave, and Cousin Oliver vexed all pious souls by sitting in the King's seat, Henrietta was still on the rack of her misery. She had murdered her husband, after failing in every duty she had undertaken, and disappointing every expectation she had encouraged ; and her remorse corroded her soul. But she could not die, and she dared not pray for death. At length Queen Henrietta Maria came over to England for a time : and Lady Carlisle, impelled by some sense of duty towards the young creature whose enthusiasm she had fostered, brought her under that notice from the Queen which she avoided for herself. The Queen's griefs, with all the trials of sore poverty in addition, had not worn her so low as Henrietta's ; and the compassionate gaze which the Queen cast on the image of woe before her was a strong hint to her priestly followers.

The result was natural enough ; and Henrietta was soon in retreat for life in the Queen's nunnery at Chaillot. She felt how great the mercy was ; and the relief was beyond all previous conception. Her new guides satisfied her, in due time, that she was in no way guilty, though singularly unfortunate. She had sinned, indeed, so far as that everybody sins ; but with the particular guilt which she mourned she was in no way chargeable. She learned to see—what was so very clear to

Catholic eyes—that her whole life had been a conflict between her personal instincts of loyal duty and the delusions of her education, and of the people about her. Her very strifes with her husband had been a divine voice protesting against the impiety of her nation and her family, and asserting her own higher intelligence and virtue. Her Puritan relatives were answerable for all that had happened: and she had only to give thanks, day and night, for her rescue from perplexity and misery, and for the complacency and peace in which she was now resting at last.

There was one trouble still,—a pain which did not die out as her understanding sank to the level of the minds of her sister-recluses. She was in pain for the souls of her father and her husband,—so dreadfully guilty as they had been of rebellion, and cut off from salvation by their making the Bible and not the Church the anchor of their hope. She did what she could: she prayed for them as long as she lived, and when they were dead, obtained as many masses as possible for the repose of their souls.

Thus Henrietta passed her life, up to the age of grey hairs,—her own having been grey from the week of the Chalgrove fight. Her son was in no danger as to his faith and his prospects in life, however it might be about his morals. He was first a page of the Queen's, and then of the young King's. When too old for a page he became a courtier, and was liked none the less for being a Catholic, even after the Restoration.

Before Henrietta breathed her last, she heard some awkward news from England: but it did not trouble her very deeply. She was cured of her keenness of feeling; and she lived and died peacefully in the assurance that if men do but revere and obey their King without reserve, it rests with Heaven to see to the quality of the King.

If her countrymen had but been aware of this in time, whatever else might have happened, there would have been no



She prayed for them as long as she lived.

Page 176.



middle-class heretic, like Cousin Oliver, thrust in upon the line of English Kings, to make the nation blush to its latest day at the comparison between him and the Stuarts,—the family evidently appointed to reign over Old England for ever.

Such was the view in which Henrietta lived and died.

THE END.



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